■ LIFESTYLE / C1
Pregnancy inspires Monique now on top of int'l fashion

■ METRO / A23
Billboard on Edsa knocks out MRT; losses reach P4M

■ ENTERTAINMENT
Fil-Aussie MiG Ayesa so grateful to all Pinoys around world

■ WORLD / A13
Distressed US jet makes dramatic but safe emergency landing

US deports Jarque, wife

By Carlo F. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, September 23, 2005 ● 34 pages / vol. 20 / no. 267

www.inq7.net

Gee, thanks, Uncle Sam; lucky pols mighty pleased

By John L. Jacalbas

GMA: Tough gets going

'Maximum tolerance policy abused'

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Christine Avendaño

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—"I'm tired of chasing the bully around the schoolyard," President Macapagal-Arroyo declared yesterday.

Talking tough after escaping an impeachment attempt in Congress two weeks ago, the President offered to reconcile with her opponents but warned the rule of law would bear down on those who "attack us to unseat her."

Later in a statement, Ms Arroyo said while the government respected the rights of the people to assemble and to seek redress of grievances, these constitutional rights were "not absolute."

"They can only be exercised in a peaceful manner and always in consideration of the welfare of the majority of our people," the President said.

She said that commerce, professions, students and the business sector had complained about the disruption of business, especially in Makati, during protest rallies.

"We cannot let this continue," the former said. "Our policy of maximum tolerance has been abused, these rights have become licentious, to the detriment of the peace and order and the welfare of the greater majority."

"The government will not tolerate activities that hurt the people among the pieces of evidence retrieved by the Department of Agrarian Reform in the Hacienda Luisita case.

Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser C. Pangandaman said the DAR had already picked an option to resolve the controversial case involving the landholdings owned by the Cojuangcos, the family of former President Corazon C. Aquino.

Pangandaman said the DAR would announce its "final" decision on the Luisita case on Wednesday or Thursday. "We're almost there," he said in an interview following a closed-door meeting of DAR officials Tuesday.

"We have picked an option ... [after] the recommendations were presented to us and the views of the task force and legal counsel were heard, but I need to review it. We have to be very careful about this," he said.

HERO'S FAREWELL FOR HAYDEE YORAC

VII-SEE Her ancient search and five trees now highest in the business, these were the five mortal remains of Haydee Yorac. At the Libingan ng mga Bayani, her remains are borne on a caisson escorted by the Security and Escort Battalion of the Philippine Army. (Inset) Incidentally, Haydee's photo fell after the funeral and its glass frame shattered but barely. Yorac hangs on to the memories and the flag that draped her daughter's casket. (Story on Page A2.)

US report details coup plotters' July meet

By Norman Bordadora

THE US EMBASSY IN MANILA "quietly" put contingency plans in place when it received inside information that a plot against President Macapagal-Arroyo was discussed at a meeting in July of 40 to 50 active military officers.

In an "informal assessment" prepared by a senior US government policy maker" dated July 20, the embassy detailed the conduct of the meeting attended most by Filipino Army and Navy officers based in Metro Manila.

It said the "initial meeting" was chaired by a former president of the Young Officers Union. But the name of the officer and those of the other officers present were blacked out in the document, which was obtained by the Inquirer from a source who requested anonymity.

The report also said a senior US diplomat had privately expressed concern about the contingencies if Ms Arroyo were seriously challenged, "saying she would not go gracefully."

"[Ms] Arroyo fully discusses the possibility of a near-term attempt to oust Arroyo but sees no chance of success in the absence of a crisis. Opposition politicians who would face the many challenges confronting the country," the three-page report said.

"We have nonetheless quietly readied our task force regarding this, asked other fly to consider crisis management exercise," it said, adding:

"In July 2003, we also saw in

SPECIAL REPORT

Gonzales says Senate set him up

By DJ Yap, TJ Burgonio and Philip C. Tubeza

THE BIG NEWS came to the witness he stopped into the Ambassador Pedro Roces in the Senate.

There was Sen. Richard Ayres, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee, seated on at-the-lateral platform. Thinking Ayres were other senators, all glaring at him, he was seated on a lower level, looking up at them.

It immediately dawned on the liberal Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales that he was being prosecuted.

Gonzales remained in a political supporter, both Pimentel, his three hour ordeal before the committee on Wednesday.

"The moment he entered the hearing room, he already sensed something was wrong," said Pimentel, a leader of Senator Sen. Benjamin, narrating what Gonzales told her shortly her visit. "He felt that he was a tribunal."

The placing of the tables and chairs further unnerved Gonzales.

Survey says more Filipinos going hungry

AT THE COUNTRY FOLLOWED the "Hello Garci" scandal, the unprecedented debates, the series of hefty oil price increases, and later, by the exposé of Rizalito Marina' pards finally going into session, an alarming number of Filipinos saw all these go by as empty screams.

A survey by the Social Weather Stations from Aug. 26 to Sept. 1 showed that 15.5 percent of households nationwide consid-

DAR to let ax fall on Luisita next week

By Blancha S. Rivera

A TWO-TOP HOLDING LESS than P50 in our wages, the nonbanks of farmers who signed a contract they could not understand, reports of burned sugarcane fields and the absence of life islands for the past 15 years were

1.3M Americans ordered to flee from monster storm

GALVESTON, TEXAS—MORE than a million people fled Texas and Louisiana on Hurricane Rita swirled toward the Gulf Coast on Thursday with 200-kph winds in what forecasters said could be the strongest hurricane ever to roar for Texas.

Crude oil prices climbed toward $68 a barrel on Thursday as Rita raised fears it would hit key production facilities along the US Gulf Coast that were largely untouched by Hurricane Katrina's onslaught three weeks ago.

The Category 5 hurricane, the highest on the scale, with 280-kph winds was expected to strike Texas, the heart of US oil production, on Saturday. More than 1.3 million people in Texas and Louisiana—including hundreds of oil workers—were ordered to evacuate.

"This storm, yours are into early Hurricane Rita," said Governor Rick Perry. "We have to be very careful about this," he said.

RACING AGAINST TIME and Rita, evacuees head for Houston, Texas.

A2
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2003
Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Issued 8:00 a.m. Today: Cloudy with isolated rains and thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds from the southwest. Seas slight to moderate. Tomorrow: Cloudy with isolated rains and thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds from the southwest. Seas slight to moderate. (PAGASA) Manila

6 more named to Charter body

MALACAÑANG HAS ADDED DAVAO CITY MAYOR Rodolfo Duterte and five others to the list of appointments to the constitutive commission it has created to proposals for the amendment of the Constitution.

This brings to 39 the members of the commission appointed so far, 11 shy of the 50 that is supposed to make up the body.

The 39 are to work additionally today with Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita who heads the Cabinet screening committee that made the recommendations for the appointments.

Apolo Domingo Quintos, the new appointments in the commission are: Ms. Rolando Bacon PIC, director at large of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines; Calamba City Mayor Abel Ilustre Almario, secretary general of the League of Cities of the Philippines; lawyer Rina Linda Jimenez, president of the Philippine Bar Association; Dr. Emily Mendenilla, chairman of the government peace panel negotiating with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and former congressman Serge Lopez.

Study groups

Presidential Management Staff chief Rigoberto Tiglao described the consultative commission, created by executive order to study proposed constitutional amendments, as a study group and advisory body that will support Congress in its work of amending the Constitution.

The Palace announced the oath-taking of the appointees at an initial 10 commission members composed of business leaders, constitutional experts, academicians, economists and ex-officials and newspaper columnists.

But House Deputy Speaker Carlos Isagani Zarate yesterday expressed dismay over the initial list of 10, saying that not a single Muslim Filipino, whether politician, professional or whether was included to represent the views and aspirations of the Muslim Filipinos in the country.

"It's like again a case of institutional bigotry" said the Bataan representative.

Rep. Mujib Susukan, of the Muslim Mindanao party-list group, noted the President's failure to schedule a representation of the indigenous peoples as well.

"It only showed that Muslims and indigenous people are not for masses and passing" Susukan said.

He also claimed that the initial membership was composed mostly of members who come from Luzon.

"The list only strengthened the Manila-imperialist thinking of our national leaders," he said.

Opposition Rep. Jacinto Soto said the constitutional commission must "evolve" as to recommendations could easily be overturned by the House of Representatives.

"They say that our vote is make it palatable to the public. But at the end of the day we can easily scrap (a recommendation)," he told a forum in Manila.

Palace influence

Party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño said the commission was dishearteningly wary of influencing Charter change, noting that with administration allies surrounding the majority in Congress, anything the commission proposes would likely be supported by majority of legislators.

But Dean Florido Bacungan, governor of the Philippine Constitution Association, pointed out that recommendatory bodies have always played a part in the drafting of earlier Charters.

He said that during the drafting of the 1987 Constitution, a group from the University of the Philippines College of Law had prepared documents containing the recommendations.

"Some parts of the 1987 Constitution were taken from that," he said.

Similarly during the drafting of the 1973 Constitution, another group from UP prepared a book containing suggestions about what should be done in amending the Charter, Bacungan said. Christian Monsod, Leila Delavervia and Jose J. Aliposa, FOI Mendoza-Davaao

'Words not enough to honor Haydee'

By Fe B. Zamora
and Tarra V. Quismundo

HEGUNE WORDS WILL WE, mayor enough to honor Haydee Yorac, her friends and admirers Wednesday announced plans for the Haydee Yorac Memorial Awards to be given to among HS. citizen who follow her path of "integrity, fearlessness and the cause of justice."

"There are so few people of your ilk. Yes, are truly a treasure that we cannot allow to simply slip away but must make sure that you love soul exists in our hearts but also in the hearts of generations to come," said Prof. Sedfrey Ordoñez in her eulogy delivered Wednesday night.

Ordoñez asked all the more to perpetuate Yorac's memory by donating the seed money for the Haydee Yorac Memorial Awards.

"It is not enough to honor you until words. We must also honor you in deed," said Monsod, urging others, including University of the Philippines alumni and staff to contribute to the memorial fund in Yorac's honor.

The two chair an hour Wednesday colleagues, friends and former students of Yorac at the UP College of Law paid tribute to the former Supreme Court justice who died Sept. 5 after a long battle with cancer.

Yorac, 64, was cremated Tuesday at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

Her colleagues and friends remembered her as a woman of integrity and principle who was not afraid to take unpopular stands.

"Her own colleagues knew her as a woman who was not afraid to stand alone," said Monsod, recalling how Yorac, in 1986, was known to dissent with justice and had even enjoyed getting her at herself.

Yesterday at noon, Yorac was laid to rest at the Libingan ng mga Bayani at her Barkada's request in a ceremony of decorated old soldiers and fire trucks.

Yorac passed away on Sept. 13 in Chicago, Illinois, where she had been undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer.

In addition to the memorial only for the service's outstanding servants, the former chair of the Commission on Elections and the Presidential Commission on Good Government was brought to her final resting place by some 200 relatives, friends, colleagues and others whom she had touched throughout her 64 years.

"We would like to thank everybody who shared their love for Haydee. And we are grateful for the honor given to our sister, and we hope that everything that she did would be a source of people for other people to follow," said Yorac's only brother, Jose, the sixth in a brood of seven of which Haydee was the eldest.

Yorac was given a hero's burial in the dignitaries section of the state cemetery. In a plot a few steps away from the graves of Ramon Magsaysay and Arturo Tolentino.

She was buried a day after the 22nd anniversary of the declaration of martial law, a time Yorac was jailed for political activists.

Besides Jose, she would grow back to the station, in POEA chair, billions of pesos in collapsed 28-game wreath of the Marcoses and their cronies.

Among those present at the funeral were Supreme Court Secretary Eduardo Erinta, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, Energy Secretary Isidro Lorillo, Sen. Jinkee Arroyo and Malaysia Rep. Tina Rosales.

A 21-gun salute marked the memorial. Yorac's coffin was lowered into the ground at 11:58 a.m.

ELECTRIC SERVICE IN THESE AREAS WILL BE MOMENTARILY INTERRUPTED FOR FACILITIES UPGRADING AND OTHER LINE WORK.

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2003

CAPITOL SUBDIVISION AND ENVI - PASIG

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BREAKER #2402

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BREAKER #2402

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK (TAL, ANGONO) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BREAKER #2402

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK (TAL, ANGONO) AND A-BANK (BAL, ANGONO) – THE MIDDLE OF CIRCUITS CAPITOL SUBDIVISION AND ENVI - PASIG

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK (TAL, ANGONO) AND A-BANK (BAL, ANGONO) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BREAKER #2402

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK (TAL, ANGONO) AND A-BANK (BAL, ANGONO) – THE MIDDLE OF CIRCUITS LOS ANGELES AND PASIG AREA

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BREAKER #2402

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK – THE MIDDLE OF CIRCUITS LOS ANGELES AND PASIG AREA

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2003

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK – THE MIDDLE OF CIRCUITS LOS ANGELES AND PASIG AREA

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK – THE MIDDLE OF CIRCUITS LOS ANGELES AND PASIG AREA

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2003

BETWEEN A-BANK AND A-BANK – THE MIDDLE OF CIRCUITS LOS ANGELES AND PASIG AREA

Know the electricity cost of your appliances.

Taxman charges ex-singer; Regine not yet off the hook

By Cynthia D. Balana
and Armand Nocum

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue charged Viva operator and former singer Dante de la Rosa with tax evasion before the Department of Justice yesterday, claiming the couple failed to pay taxes for two years amounting to P61.4 million.

So is Regine Velasquez de los Santos in real life, is the vice president treasurer of Philippine Cornerbuilt Liner Corp. which her husband is president.

Cornerbuilt is engaged in iron, steel and other fabrication, building, engineering, auto repair, construction, and in the manufacture and fabrication of chassis body and other auto parts accessories.

Investigation showed that Cornerbuilt-Mendoza group failed to remit P76.46 million and percentage tax amounting to P7.35 million from 2002 to 2004 based on the company's sales declaration, to the financial statement it submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Construction Industry Authority of the Philippines, Sub-Contractors Registration Board, Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board and Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The BIR said the tax liabilities are to an "unreferred giver," a woman with an indomitable spirit and a beautiful soul."

Yorac's remains were transferred Wednesday afternoon from the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati City.

At the International Center at the UP for a final farewell from her oldest sister.

"Are you embarrassed, Haydee? Are you rolling your eyes?" said Monsod, reminding everyone that Yorac, in life, was never comfortable with praise and had even enjoyed poking fun at herself.

Yesterday at noon, Yorac was laid to rest at the Libingan ng mga Bayani at her Barkada's request in a convoy of decorated old soldiers and fire trucks.

Yorac passed away on Sept. 13 in Chicago, Illinois, where she had been undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer.

In addition to the memorial only for the service's outstanding servants, the former chair of the Commission on Elections and the Presidential Commission on Good Government was brought to her final resting place by some 200 relatives, friends, colleagues and others whom she had touched throughout her 64 years.

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Gov't sees peace pact with MILF next year

THE GOVERNMENT AS renewed yesterday it expects to sign a peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) early next year but a rebel spokesperson, while agreeing that "progress is manifested" against any more premature and unilateral announcements of any breakthroughs.

Government Troops and the MILF have been observing a ceasefire in the mainstream Islamic pain in Muslim Mindanao for the last two years while conducting peace talks in Malaysia.

After three latest round of talks in Kuala Lumpur last week, both sides announced they had reached a "consensus" on the question of the Muslim's reserved domain but presided to detail. The same, reportedly the last major hurdle, involves the extent of the territorial lands the Muslims have set to Christian and other settlers from elsewhere in the country over the years.

In a statement issued by Silita ending yesterday, chief government negotiator Silvestre Afable said an agreement on the issue would probably be concluded by December this year following this, the final stage of the talks would lay out the mechanics of "demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of combatants into the mainstream of society," he added.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu welcomed the statement, saying it showed the government's sincerity that be cautioned against "prematurely announcing any breakthroughs.

"The talks are done in increments. The moment it becomes one to the last strand that we have to settle, but we can't hastily make a conclusion that a peace deal will be signed by early next year," Kabalu told AFP.

"This is a negotiation process. Any announcement of a decision must emanate from both parties," he stressed. – AFP with a report from Donna Pazzibugan

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

65
23rd SEA Games

SPORTS

A1

E-mail sr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyboy S. Molmisa

Do-or-die for Dolphins, Knights

FOUL! Ateneo Blue Eagle cries as skein Lemery's (Jonathan Williams in Game 2 of UAAP-NCAA Finals series. Odds are about even when the two teams dispute the crown today

Crown on line as coaches plot battle plans

By Jasmine W. Payo

NOW THAT THE NCAA BASKETball tournament has come down to a winner-take-all battle, the Letran Knights and the Philippine Christian U Dolphins will try to keep in mind their coaches' list of reminders.

"In every single possession, we have to execute," said coach Louie Alas after his Knights clinched Game 2 in Sunday's do-or-die series at 3 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum. "You can never underestimate the firepower of PCU."

Dolphins mentor Jerry Yee reminded reinforcement Knights' reserve Ted Tiu(r) was last Wednesday to make the title series at 1-1.

"I believe we still have the courage and the power to perform [now]," noted Yee(d). "We showed that in Game 1 and hopefully we can duplicate it on Friday [today]."

In the opener of the title series Monday, PCU came out big down the stretch for a 75-71 triumph.

"In contrast to Game 1, we played very hardheadedly. In Game 2[,] we[d] listened. We have to control that in order to beat Letran. Everybody should contribute."

Alas predicted that it would boil down to a mind game since both teams have their weapons to check. "There will be minor adjustments," he said. "It will just be all mental."

And certainly no one knows that more than Harold and his Celebrities.

"We really played bad because I think my players' mindset was that it would be easy," he said after the defending champions failed to close ball to sweep the Finals series.

"We should limit our errors," Harold added. "Our players also because every psychologist, I told [Ephdy] Santos and [Chano] Ugsim that they will clamp on them so there should be extra passes. But it didn't happen."

Meanwhile, Most Improved Player Aaron Aban and senior point guard Bryan Rosales will again lead the campaign on hoisting the crown back to Letran, the 2005 champion.

Here's
GOOD NEWS!
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- Lipa
- Lucena
- Legaspi
- Malolos
- Mega
- Olongapo
- Ormoc
- Pagadian
- Pasay
- Puerto Princesa
- San Fernando, La Union
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SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 21 ISSUE, the caption of a front page photo—"The grandeur that was!"—misstated the cost of the Mexican bust. The amount of P2 billion included not only the cost of the bust itself but also that of the entire complex where the bust is situated which includes a golf course, clubhouse, swimming pool and tennis courts.

* * *

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, the banner story of the Second Front Page on Page A2—"Palace names ECOMM members"—misstated the name of the study and advisory group that was created to help Congress in amending the Constitution. The advisory group is called the Consultative Commission—not Constitutional Commission.

Digital Photo Express

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Whirlpool

SENSING THE DIFFERENCE

1.3M Americans ordered to flee from monster storm

Foreign A1

under mandatory evacuation orders as it—now a dangerous Category 5—drew energy from balmy gulf waters.

"It's not worth staying here," said Celia Moreno as she and several relatives finished packing up their homes and pets in Iowa Colonia. "Life is more important than things."

New Orleans also feared for the possibility that the storm could sweep the misery stricken city all over again.

Only three Category 5 hurricanes are known to have hit the US mainland—most recently, Andrew, which smashed South Florida in 1992.

Lessons from Katrina

Hundreds of buses were dispatched Wednesday to evacuate the poor and more frail hospital and nursing home patients, and **truckloads of water, ice and ready-made** meals, and rescue and medical teams were on standby in an effort to show the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina.

"We hope and pray that Hurricane Rita will not be a devastating storm, but we got to be ready for the worst," President George W. Bush said in Washington.

Early Thursday Rita was centered about 870 km east southeast of Galveston and was turning west near 34 kph. Forecasters predicted it **would come ashore along the central Texas** coast between Galveston and Corpus Christi.

Hurricane-force winds extended up to 113 km from the center of the storm, and even a slight rightward turn could prove devastating to the low-lying towns stretching Nine Orleans.

The US mainland has never been hit by both a Category 4 and a Category 5 in the **same season. Katrina at one point became a** Category 5 storm, but weakened slightly to a Category 4 just before coming ashore.

In the Galveston-Houston Corpus Christi area, about 1.3 million people were under orders to get out. In addition to 20,000 at shore along the Louisiana coast. Special attention was given to hospitals and nursing homes. **three weeks after scores of sick and elderly** patients in the New Orleans area drowned in Katrina's floodwaters as died in the stifling **heat while waiting in hot vacant.**

Ghost town

Galveston was a virtual ghost town on Thursday. The city's lone hospital was evacuated, along with residents of a six-story retirement home.

The coastal city of 58,000 people on an island 2.5 meters above sea level was nearly wiped off the map in 1900 when an unnamed hurricane killed between 6,000 and 12,000. It **remains the nation's worst natural disaster.**

City Manager Steve Lellman said the storm surge could reach 13 meters. Galveston is protected by a seawall that is only 5 meters tall. "It's a good picture for us," Lellman said.

In Houston, "Rita" **largest city and home to** the highest concentration of Katrina refugees, geography makes evacuation particularly tricky. **While many hurricane-prone cities are right on** the coast, Houston is 100 km inland, so a coastal suburbia area of 2 million people must evacuate through a metropolitan area of 5 million people where the highways often are clogged.

Galveston Mayor Lyda Ann Thomas said buses used to take people and their pets off the island were running to clear supply on Wednesday and armed due smugglers could be left to fend for themselves.

Officials in Corpus Christi were also **preparing to load up about 300 buses on** Thursday morning to evacuate people who have needed any help to get out.

Threat to oil facilities

Texas, which produces more than 23 percent of total US crude, is bracing for similar havoc from Rita.

Eighteen of its 26 refineries, with a combined distillation capacity of 4 million barrels daily, are located near the Gulf of Mexico. Nine of those facilities, **representing 12 per**cent of US refinery capacity have shut down, Dow Jones Newswires reported.

"Some of those refineries in Texas, they're at sea level. It's a risky way...it floods very easily," said Ali Jalilian, vice president of risk management at Energy Merchant LLC in New York.

The US Minerals Management Service said **Wednesday that 460 platforms in the Gulf were** unstaffed, up sharply from 150 on Tuesday. More than 73 percent of oil production in the region **blocked up from 50 percent on Tuesday.**

Light sweet crude for November rose 81 cents to US$67.08 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Natural gas prices are around 40 percent higher than a year ago, though still below the intraday record of $76.85 on Aug. 30 when Katrina made landfall in Louisiana, damaging and shutting down numerous oil refineries and other facilities.

Death toll

The death toll from Katrina passed the 1,000 mark on Wednesday in five Gulf Coast states. The body count in Louisiana alone was put at nearly 800, most found in the receding floodwaters of New Orleans.

Rita is the 17th named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, making this the fourth busiest season since record-keeping started in 1851. The record is 21 named storms in 1933. The hurricane season is not over until Nov. 30.

Jennifer McDonald in Galveston said she planned to stay. She and her husband have enough food and water to last 10 days in their wooden home. If it gets really bad, the couple will take to the roof.

"If it goes, it goes," the 42-year-old mom said of the house. "We're completely prepared." AP

Congress, Palace urged to reconcile VAT positions

By Philip C. Tubeza

AN ADMINISTRATION CONGRESSMAN YESterday urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to convene the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) next week in order to reconcile the positions of Malacañang and Congress on the implementation of the fuel and electricity components in the Expanded Value-Added Tax (EVAT) Law.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the House committee on economic affairs, said: "We should help clarify any policy uncertainty with respect to the fiscal reform program of the Arroyo administration which has been off-balanced by the unabated rise in oil prices to record highs."

Salceda initially filed a joint resolution, which he converted into a bill, deferring implementation of the VAT law's provisions taxing oil products and electricity to June 1, 2006, due to current soaring oil prices.

Malacañang had said the law should be implemented in full, with the President adding she was amenable to deferring the tax on oil and electricity if Congress wanted it.

Coming together

Salceda said the Ledac meeting, coming after the current political crisis erupted on May 30, would be a "good chance for the country's newly divided political leaders to come together, break the ice and find some space or common ground to move the socioeconomic agenda forward."

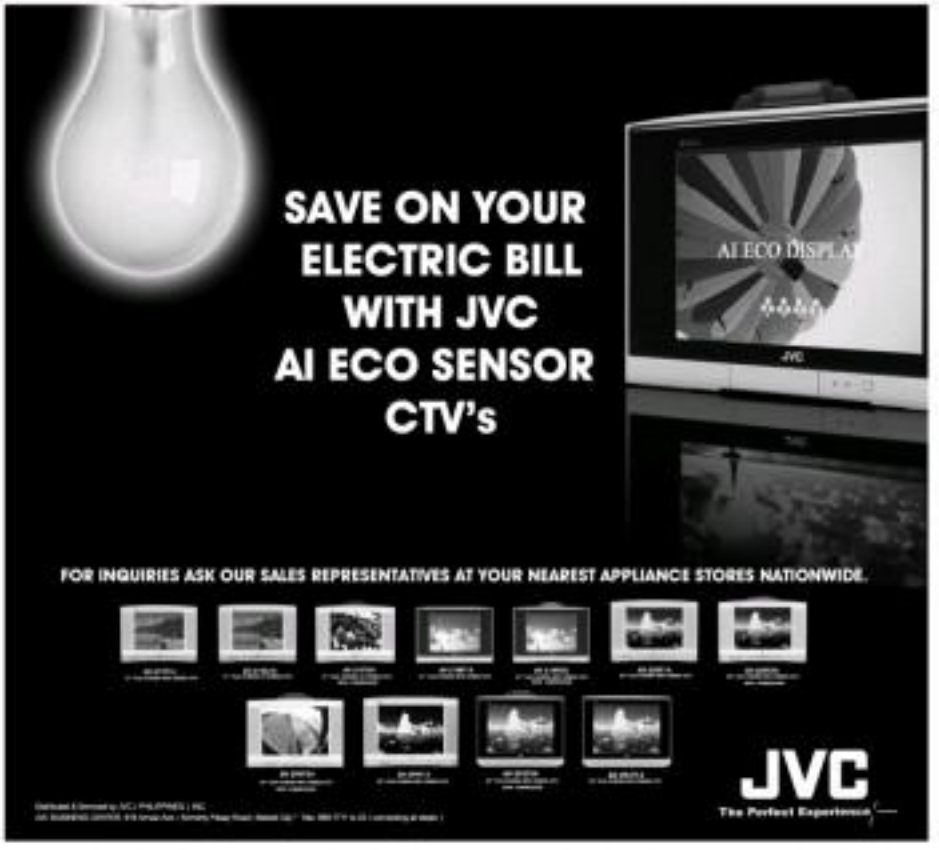
The Supreme Court is expected to rule in three weeks on the motions for reconsideration filed by opposition lawmakers who had questioned the VAT law's constitutionality.

Salceda said it was "still possible" Congress could pass the bill by the time the high court made its final ruling and lifted its TRO against the VAT law's implementation.

"We urge the House leadership and the committee on ways and means to give preferential attention to the issue given the urgency of providing temporary relief to urban working families and rural farmers," Salceda said.

But while Salceda wants to defer the VAT on oil and power, the chair of the House committee on energy has filed a bill repealing those provisions in the law.

Lanao del Norte Rep. Abdullah Dimaporo said he was "working double time" on House Bill No. 4645, which would exempt the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of power as well as the sale and importation of petroleum products from the VAT law.



DAR to let ax fall on Luisita next week

Front page A1

The DAR has been extremely cautious in deciding the Luisita farm workers' petition to scrap the stock distribution option (SDO) agreement and award the nearly 3,500 farmer-beneficiaries in farmers under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, or Republic Act No. 6657. Congress passed the law in 1988 during the Aquino presidency.

The SDO allows landowners, who run their farms as corporations, to distribute shares of stock to their workers in lieu of a land transfer.

Resign recommend

Pangandaman has repeatedly said that the DAR's action on the petition, which has been pending since October 2003, is not related to political developments in the country.

Aquino has called for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo and has led street protests following the junking of the impeachment complaints against the President by the House of Representatives.

"We discussed whether we could handle this case or it should be left to the court, and none we have decided that this is an agrarian issue and that the DAR has jurisdiction over it," Pangandaman said.

Undersecretary Nestor Acosta, head of the team created to study the legal issues in Tuk Rura Luisita's recommendations, was ordered to submit a finished report on the Luisita case today.

Acosta refused to divulge details of his report, but said that except for the labor issues, the DAR would answer the petitioners' allegations point by point.

Violations

Some 5,000 Luisita farm workers have alleged that the Cojuangcos, through Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), had violated the terms of the SDO agreement and that their lives had not improved at all since the SDO took effect.

Last year, violence erupted at the hacienda when policemen and soldiers dismantled the picket of striking workers of the sugar mill. Seven people were killed.

Pangandaman, however, said the scope of the DAR's decision on Hacienda Luisita would cover only agrarian issues, specifically the petition to revoke the SDO and distribute the hacienda to farm workers.

"There were so many violations of the SDO that we just asked the DAR to do an on-site inspection and see for themselves how the farmers there were living," Jobert Pahilga of Bonita, one of the law firms handling the Luisita case for the farmers, said in an interview.

Pahilga said a team from the DAR regional office and Tuk Rura Luisita went to the hacienda twice early this year and interviewed the farmers.

Coerced

A report on the focus group discussions held by the DAR in 10 barangays said many of the farmers who had signed the memorandum of agreement on the SDO did not understand the contract.

"Thirteen (78%) farmer-workers (beneficiaries) signed, but they do not understand the terms and conditions. They were only assured (on signing the MOA, threatened) that they would not be given [work] if they did not sign," the report said, partaking in interviews in Barangay Matapocnitos.

"One claimed that she cry [sic] hearing the MOA was actuated," the report added.

Pahilga said the farmers also presented a photocopy of a pay slip of Carmelcare Transag Jr., who took home only P9.20 from his gross pay of P1,941.50 due to deductions for an educational loan and union dues.

No dividends

He said the farmers had also told DAR officials during the hearings that they had never received dividends from their shares in Hacienda Luisita Inc. since the SDO agreement was signed in 1989.

"The shares of stocks are useless, no dividends are given (shared between for 15 years), the HLI convenes on spectacle," the report said, the committee to peacebuilders concluded.

Task Force Luisita moved for investigation into the Luisita case following the violent dispersal of farm workers that killed seven people and injured hundreds in November last year.

Survey says more Filipinos going hungry

Front page A1

rated themselves as having "experienced hunger" or had nothing to eat at least once in the past three months.

It was the second highest figure since SWS began its quarterly survey on hunger in July 1998, the start of the Estrada administration. A record high of 16.1 percent was set in March 2003, two months after Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the presidency following the Edsa II uprising.

From the first quarterly survey to the last, hunger has been felt by 10.4 percent of the population on the average.

Around this time last year, the SWS poll showed that hunger spells were repeated by 15.1 percent of Filipinos.

Meanwhile, mainly through the Department of Social Welfare and Development, they responded by launching the subsidy and food-for-work programs targeting schoolchildren and the unemployed in the country's poorest provinces.

Another mass feeding program for grade school pupils, this time offering vitamin-enriched noodles, is planned for implementation starting next year.

Very serious

In a statement yesterday, the SWS said the latest numbers—15.5 percent—indicate that the "people's current economic situation continues to be very serious." That figure, it said, represented an estimated 2.6 million families.

It was also higher than the previous quarterly survey conducted in May, when the hungry constituted 12 percent of all households.

In a parallel survey, however, SWS reported a decrease in the number of Filipinos who considered themselves "poor."

Self-rated poverty

"The proportion of household heads reporting themselves as 'mahirap' [poor] went down to 49 percent in August 2005, from 57 percent in May 2005," it said. SWS called this indicator "self-rated poverty."

Still, the monthly family budget, which the self-rated poor said they would need to escape poverty, went up from P18,000 in May to P20,000 in August among Metro Manila respondents, according to SWS.

Lowering living standards

The polling group noted that what the respondents believed to be the "poverty threshold" budget had not really increased in the past five years despite the rise in the cost of living each year.

"The failure of the thresholds to increase despite so much inflation is a sign that the poor are actually lowering their real living standards," it said.

By area of respondents, the hunger level was 16.7 percent in Metro Manila, 15 percent in the rest of Luzon, 13.3 percent in the Visayas, and 12 percent in Mindanao.

To come up with the nationwide figure of 15.5 percent, SWS actually added up the answers of two types of "hungry" respondents: those who felt "severe hunger" by stating words "often or always" in the last three months, and those who endured "moderate hunger" or had nothing to eat "once or a few times" in the same period.

'Severe hunger'

The "severe hunger" bracket in the August poll made up 3.6 percent—translating to about 488,000 families—compared with 2.9 in the May poll.

The "moderate hunger" grouping grew to 12.4 percent in August—about 2.1 million families—from 9.2 percent in May.

Compared with May, severe hunger rose in Metro Manila, while moderate hunger rose across the country, SWS noted.

SWS conducted face-to-face interviews with 1,200 randomly selected household heads—300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

The poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points for national proportions and plus or minus 6 percentage points for area proportions. Nef Cruz-Arao

Poisoned Fiba deserves an antidote

THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee has been making ad-mirers.

Jose "Peping" Cojuangco has claimed everything would be fine even if no less basketball-mad nation ever disputed in the forthcoming freethrow issue Lauvo.

Of course, not everybody will nod and agree with Cojuangco.

Even Milo Cojuangco-Jeworski, the POC chief's cousin-bearing daughter, cannot remain due her father speaks for the whole populace in this case.

There are sensitive spots here and there, mainly in the cities areas, who live and swear by basketball.

* * *

If it were tennis or any other sport the cornering that was in danger of being swamped from the Games calendar, it would not cause so much worry.

But take away billiards or boxing from the SEA Games calendar and you would also hear a howl of protest.

It cannot be avoided. Athletes and swimming could lend the biggest number of medals. But hence fans will be seeing their biggest chests for our competitors in the so-called Three B's (basketball, boxing, billiards) when SP seeks its first ever overall SEA Games championship starting May 27.

Of course, Cojuangco will dust basketball had been through here, it has remained the best-seller. Ibe No. 1 sport in the land.

* * *

Basketball, no doubt, is still the main staple.

Second, it lives the calendar and the poor Pinoy would feel as though not has been stricken out of his diet.

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

People would feel lost, disoriented without the regular favorite.

Cojuangco is himself aware of this.

The POC chairman wants everybody happy so he has scheduled a trip to Geneva to appeal the suspension of the Philippines by the Fiba, ruling body in international basketball.

* * *

In pleading his case, Cojuangco would plan to the underdog.

Indeed, Dennis Gladden, the IOC representative in the country, has said he was not too optimistic about Cojuangco's mission.

Cojuangco had himself explained that "it's not in my hands."

All we could do is keep our fingers crossed.

Fellow lovers of basketball here should crowd all Cojuangco with the best of wishes. Let's also hope Fiba decision-makers would lend a weaker ear to our representatives.

* * *

Wilma, indeed, could be the main culprit behind the suspension of the Philippines by the Fiba.

Moreover, the world body need not look far to know the truth behind the banning by the POC of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

All it he needs to ask about the character and acronisme of Graham Lim, both in his capacity as disciplined as part of the BAP and as an unwanted alien in the Philippines.

Lim, ordered deported by the Philippine government for taking his family passport, had caused the country the biggest shame and pain in the international basketball field.

Lim is no flirt and rogue that the entire POC had to rush being suspended by the Fiba just to make sure the senseless tape of BP basketball by Lim was stopped.

Lim has left his gang of Mikel followers in sending BP basketball to its deepest pit of disgrace and doom.

Unfortunately for Pibe Ground in Geneva, it has obviously allowed itself to be governed by Lim and his cohorts in Piba-Asia.

Pray that Peping Cojuangco is able to deliver the right antidote next week.

It's Ateneo vs La Salle in semifinals

By Jasmine W. Payo

IT SEEMED ATENEO CAN'T WAIT to get at La Salle in the finals.

Overcoming a rocky stretch in the third quarter, the Eagles made it a three-game sweep over the University of the East Warriors this season, winning, 79-66, yesterday to claim the No. 2 spot in the Final four of the Chold basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

That means the Eagles will be facing the Archers in the semifinals that Sunday with Ateneo hoping to secure a first win in three games with La Salle—the year in-charge typhoon Pibo's side-effect.

The top-seeded Far Eastern U Tamaraws will battle the Warriors in the other Final Four pairing Sunday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Armed with twice-to-beat incentives as the top two teams in the eliminations, the Tamaraws and the Archers need only to win once to forge a repeat of their championship showdown last year.

"This is the first time our big men had the legs," said coach Norman Black after providing out the Warriors in their playoff for third. "We haven't been getting that big production from them lately. It's a good sign going into Sunday's game."

The Eagles' frontcourt took charge with JC Intal leading with 11 points. Forward Doug Kramer added 10 points and grabbed 10 rebounds.

The Eagles outscored their early double-digit edge with Intal pumping in eight of their first 12 points for a 32-30 edge at the third quarter.

Earlier, Ateneo's defending champion Lady Patriots claimed the first title berth in the women's division after nipping the FEU Lady Tamaraws, 65-58, in double-overtime.

The Lady Eagles, runners-up last season, dethroned the UP Lady Maroons, 46-32, in their a knockout game for the remaining Final-spot.

The scores:

First Game (Women):

ATENEO 66 - Jose 16, Umana 8, Sabas 7, Villanueva 6, Hernandez 5, Ngo 4, Gamboa 4, Quimpo 3, Padrid 2, Sevilla 0

EP 32 - Mananquil 7, Galanza 6, Aquino 6, Flores 5, Ignacio 5, Lazaro 3, Dee 1, Arroyo 0, Salerno 0, Fernandez 0, Rosario 0, Rubio 0, Tordesillas 0

Quarters: 12-9, 30-32, 46-32, 66-58

Second Game (Women):

ADMU 58 - Arago 20, Constantino 13, Ramirez 11, Dionisio 5, Lumagui 4, Alonzo 2, Jalbuena 2, Cortez 0

FEU 56 - Abad 19, Ramos 14, Jose 7, Ordoña 6, Mercado 6, Abella 4, Nuval 2, Gerardo 0, Bernal 0, Gonzalez 0

Quarters: 14-11, 28-28, 46-46, 67-58 (2-2-10-2, OT)

Third Game (Men):

ATENEO 79 - Intal 19, Kramer 10, Montemayor 10, Tenorio 8, Dionisio 8, Ignacio 7, Jamerson 5, Lazarte 3, Magpayo 3, Mallillin 2, Mahinay 1

Quarters: 19-14, 41-41, 60-51, 79-66

ATENEO'S JA Tenorio drives past University of the East's Jovel Canlayan in their game yesterday.

PSC pledges SEA Games full support

By Marcus R. Castillo

THE GOVERNMENT MUST DO ITS SHARE up-half of the country's budgetary needs so to able to successfully host the 23rd Southeast Asian Games, the chair of the Philippine Sports Commission said yesterday.

"We are saying the hosting must be upheld are saying that the government is not helping," William "Butch" Ramirez said yesterday. "There were statements that the government is not doing its share for the Games.

"This is a struggle to all everyone that the President is contributing this much for the staging of the Games."

Aside from the P200 million that President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier pledged from her Social Fund, Ramirez said the government will be spending at least P200 million more for the board and lodging, competition uniforms of the athletes, the opening parade and other incidentals.

The PSC has earmarked US$50-a day in food allowances for each athlete during the Nov. 27-Dec. 5 Games, while setting a budget of US$40 a day for the athlete's hotel accommodation.

Several news reports have come up in recent weeks saying the Philoss has run so fully state the P1.2 billion needed to successfully stage the Games.

"The Philoss (Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee) is still in charge," Ramirez said. "We are here to help."

Junior netters eye KL circuit berths

THE QUEST FOR THE MALAYSIA TROPHY GRAND prime hosts top tallest talent-rich Olivapace City hosts the North Luzon leg of the qualifiers of the 2003 Mike Arroyo Tennis Cup from tomorrow to Monday at the Olivapace Tennis Club.

All five regional champions in the boys' and girls' 14 under, 12 under and unisex 10 under divisions qualify to the National Finals to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from December to represent the Philippines in the 2003 Malaysia Junior Tennis Circuit in December.

The Mike tournament, organized by Children's Tennis Workshop with support from Adidas, is being coordinated with the UPIC—Olivapace Tennis Club of Dr. Cesario P. Torres... under the guidance of club-president/owner John Aquino.

REMEMBER: Hanging

End of road for PBA's 'Aerial Voyager'

By Jane Navarro

ASI LAID CAUSE UP WITH FORMER FIRST Mikelle Player Ranged Mortuary.

Near-burning with young, promising talents in the wings, the Red Bull decides relegated the 1995 MVP to the reserve list for the coming 2003-2004 Philippine Basketball Association season.

"It's hard to give up all its accomplishments, but we don't have much choice," said Red Bull Barako coach Yeng Guiao.

"There comes a time when an older player should give way to the younger ones. Once were a choice of giving his slot to a younger player with a lot of potential, or keep him. Obviously and get the best performance from him."

The Barakos opted to keep the 36-year-old Montano in the sidelines rather than lose the services of any new from among Lordy Tugado...Jun the Mercado, Cyrus Baguio and rookies Lee Rapada and Larry Fonacier.

Montano, however, will continue to receive his monthly salary with the Barako until next year.

A reliable source close to the 174-year PBA veteran said Montano would seek a slot in Sta. Lucia Realty, Alaska or Talk N' Text, even though due respective lineups of these teams are already full.

"He gave him the option to stay so he could formally retire and we can give him a very send off," said Guiao. "But he feels he can still play."

Montano began his pro career with Swift in 1990 and captured the MVP in 1995 while playing for Swift. Known as the "Aerial Voyager" for his high-flying forays to the hoop, Montano is a member of the 5,000 points and 3,000 assists clubs and has compiled 9,433 points.

Unrated Tan Ho advances with top Filipino bets

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FILIPINO SEEDS MICHAEL LORENZO Narrazo and Pablo Clemente II breezed to the quarterfinals in the company of unrated Joshua Tan Ho who whipped spice stones in yesterday's Montana-DB junior tennis championships.

Tan Ho, just 14 but already with two titles in the World Junior Championships under his belt, showed surprising maturity in routing Raymond Palacios, 6-2, 6-1.

An eighth grader at the Immaculate Conception School, Tan Ho handily won over the fans at the Ynares Sports Complex Sports Center in Pasig with his masterful conquest of Palacios.

"I think I played my best game today," said the 5-foot-3 Tan Ho, who has been training under former Davis Cupper Manny Tecson.

Tan Ho will face today Aspers Dahlan Rasidin, the ninth seed and World No. 726, who overcame Makassar Mohd Asha Ismail Mudin, 6-4, 6-1.

The second-seeded Narrazo and the fifth-seeded Clemente made it to the next round after breathing out Japan's Kazuma Kobayashi, 6-1, 6-4, and Taiwan's Lin Kuan-hung, 6-2, 6-3, respectively.

Narrazo's next assignment will be Chol Wee-shih of Korea, who scored a 6-3, 6-3 upset of No. 8 Chang Fu-shi of Taiwan.

Clemente will take on top seed Australian William McNamee, who routed Chow win to get past Taiwan Chang Sun-hsun, 6-7 (5), 6-0, 6-1.

Michael Rasos, the other unranked Filipino in the tournament sponsored by Dunlop Sails, Holiday Inn Manila Galleria, Smart Pilot and Farmers Manufacturer, was eliminated by Taiwan's Lee Hsun, 6-3, 6-2.

TOP seed William McNamee of Australia returns to Saurit Kumar's Chung Soo-hun (McNamee lifted from a cut down to rout Chung.

SPORTSWATCH

Petron inter-school taekwondo Saturday

ABOUT 1,000 tots are expected to vie for honors in the 2002 Petron national inter-school Taekwondo championships tomorrow and on Sunday at the Rizal Memorial Stadium. According to Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert G. Aventajado, the tournament is open to all schools affiliated with the PTA. Eligibility competition starting Saturday is limited to elementary team of 12 delegates will be a special entry in the event. Competition will be conducted in senior team and women; junior team and women; mid-junior men and women and grade school boys and girls). The two-day event is supported by the Philippine Sports Commission. Petron, Samsung and Mbc Mental are enthusiasts are invited to witness the competition starting at 8 a.m.

Prize bonanza awaits Poker King winners

A BONANZA of prizes awaits the winners of the fourth leg of the ongoing Poker King Challenge tournament on Sunday at Casino Filipino Pasay Star at the Philippine Plaza Hotel. Lapu-Lapu City. The event is a series of nationwide tournaments conducted by the Poker Club of the Philippines (PCP) in partnership with the Philippine Gaming Corp. (Pagcor). Prizes at stake are trophies and certificates worth over P100,000 from tournament sponsors PCP Pagcor, Jack Daniels, Miller, Genuine Draft, Bicycle Playing Cards, Marlboro Lights, Camel Filters, Pepsi-Cola and Mountain Dew. The top three winners of the Tabo-tagan event in Manila to compete in the Poker King Grand Finals to be held by the end of the year. PCP president Ray "Bobbi" Gamboa said the tournaments provide online real-time computer generated rankings of all players after every activity to calculate probabilities, re-draw pairs and to choose opponents, if any, are needed. For inquiries, call 812-0002 or visit www.pokerclubofthephilippines.com.

Siemens Cup boosts Philippine football

SOCCER is a spectator sport once again following the Siemens Cup held in March 2000 with the staging of the Lufthansa-Siemens Invitational Soccer Cup. Top teams from German professionals and organizations in the Philippines are vying for top honors and prizes in the tournament slated tomorrow at the Manila Polo Club on Gen. P. Cruz Ave. Participants consisting of combined German and female employees. Another exciting component will be the Siemens Cup Kids Soccer Clinic for children of employees of the German firm... said Tina Schumacher, director of event organizer Sam & More. "We're trying to convert basketball addicts into soccer players." Teams from Siemens, Bosch, Lufthansa, Lufthansa Technik, GTM Media 1, Sam & More, the German Chamber, Inter-Continental Center, Tennis and TUV are taking part in the tournament. The competition will also draw attendance to the 2006 World Cup to be held in Germany.

STI dribblers stop St. Clare, gain Naascu playoff

SISTERS MEUTUAH AND RAMON MAHAJO scored 16 points each in the fourth quarter as STI downed St. Clare, 64-59, yesterday to keep its semis hopes alive in the championship hopes alive in the Naascu-sponsored Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) at the CEU Gym.

With the win, the Olympians forced a playoff with the fourth contender to decide who gets into the Semi...all four championship semis against the University of Manila Tuesday.

Mercanzo and Mahinay, who combined for 34 points, struck hardest in the playoff period to turn back St. Clare, which became the fourth squeezing a twice-to-beat advantage.

Ellis also secured into the finals of the junior division against the St. Clare Baby Saints as Lionel Mahinda shot 20 points to oust the duke Hendo juan Mon Dee, 73-66.

Mhen Reyes

Distributed by NewspaperDirect

Ilocano is 2nd RP bishop named by Benedict XVI

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE SECOND FILIPINO BISHOP TO BE APpointed by Pope Benedict XVI is a middle-aged, Ilocano monsignor with an extensive experience in seminary formation.

Msgr. Jacinto Agcaoili Jose, 54, was named the new prelate of the predominantly Ilocano-speaking Diocese of Urdaneta, Pangasinan, replacing Bishop Jesus C. Galang who died on Sept. 16 last year.

"More and more, the Church is inclined to place the new bishop among the kind of people he has known since he was born," Fr. James Reuter SJ, executive secretary of the National Office of Mass Media, yesterday said of the new prelate, who was born in Laoag.

With Jose's appointment, the country now has only five dioceses with no bishops—Bangued, Bontoc-Lagawe, Iligan, Laoag, and Tagbilaran.

Jose, a Canon Law expert, worked for 16 years as professor, prefect of discipline, and rector of seminaries in Vigan and Laoag in Ilocos.

Before his designation, he was the administrator of the Diocese of Laoag and was parish priest of Burgos and Santa Monica in the province.

Political instability behind brain drain, docs group says

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POLITICAL INSTABILITY is the main reason why doctors and nurses are leaving the country, according to the Philippine Medical Association.

The continuing political crisis stoked fears of right "push factors" in the globalization of doctor drifting in earning so they could work abroad, according to a PMA poster.

Since 2000, the PMA said at least 3,500 physicians have left the country to become nurses abroad.

Around 4,000 are now enrolled in nursing schools and 1,247 took the Nursing Licensure Exam from June 2004 to 2005.

Better opportunities abroad was the reason for leaving good by 87,452 nurses who left from 1992 to 2003, according to the PMA, citing records from the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

The PMA said the figure may not even reflect the true situation as nurses who are hired directly by foreign employers do not usually go through the POEA.

"Today, many professionals are emigrating. To them, the Philippines is no longer a good place to live in or raise a family. The ruining profession has provided the means," according to the poster.

The PMA, the sizeable group of all medical and specialty organizations in the country, is set to tackle the issue in search for the poster during a medical summit workshop this quarter tomorrow.

"The exodus of doctors is inevitably linked to the current socio-political, yet totally lame to weather the crisis soon," said Dr. Gene Nisperos, secretary general of the Health Alliance for Democracy, to an investor.

Nisperos noted that the biggest exodus of nurses—at least 11,000—occurred between 2000 to 2003, during the period then President Estrada was toppled by a people power uprising and replaced by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

But political instability was not the sole reason why doctors and nurses are leaving.

Other factors cited were "poor working conditions, threat of terrorism, inadequate low pay, passed), low salaries and compensation, peace and order problems, high crime, decreased interest of doctors, and inadequate resources to perform (their) functions."

Doctors and nurses usually chose to go to the United States, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Ireland, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates.

A Filipino nurse in the US earns between $4,000 and $5,000 a month compared with a nurse here who gets a a monthly salary of $100 to $260, according to PMA records.

The PMA has called for the enactment of a National Health Service Act that would require "all licensed health professionals from state colleges and universities to serve anywhere within the country for a number of (one) equivalent to the number of years that took them to study their health professions."

Another proposal is for the Philippine Health Insurance Inc. to provide incentives to doctors and nurses who choose to serve in areas where they or professionals like them are needed most.

Low-interest loans from the Development Bank of the Philippines and the Land Bank of the Philippines would encourage rural doctors and nurses to put up their own hospitals or polyclinics, the PMA said.

Christine Y. Esguerra

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PTA chief's suspension of Duty Free head reversed

By Jerome Aning

TOURISM ACTING Secretary Ace Durafalyak yesterday reversed the order of Philippine Tourism Authority chief Robert Sean Barbers suspending the general manager of Duty Free Philippines who was facing investigation for wearing several allegedly questionable contracts in the past years.

In his memorandum to Barbers, Durafalyak backed DFP general manager Richard Gho's stance for re-consideration and temporarily set aside the preventive suspension order Gho-Leonard Barbers did not have the authority to suspend him.

The memorandum was distributed until Secretary Joseph Ace Durafalyak arrives from an official trip abroad on Sept. 26," Durafalyak, undersecretary for tourism services and regional affairs, told the business in a phone interview.

Durafalyak noted that Barbers' order did not go through the PTA Board, which Durano chairs. Barbers said he was empowered to suspend and investigate Gho because DFP is under PTA.

Durano flew to Japan also for an official trip after approving the suspension order and the filing of administrative charges for Gho the other day.

The PTA chief earlier added Gho to explain several contracts he entered into that were allegedly disadvantageous to the government and violative of rules laid down by the Commission on Audit.

One controversial contract that Gho entered into was a supply agreements for chairs, tables, condominiums and other vanities. The contract was made with Baron's Duty Free, a British Virgin Islands based firm, during the tenure of Tourism Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan.

DFP Employees Union president Dennis Mallari, who exposed the deal, last year claimed that DFP stood to lose P926 million a year, or P1.8 billion for years, over the deal. The union also filed charges against Gho before the Office of the Ombudsman.

But said DFP's supply awards were in the nature of contracts agreements and not contracts, where DFP convinces to handle the importation, marketing, sale and warehousing of goods.

He said the records were approved by the PTA Board and based on long standing supply arrangements Negros must the importers of the DFP during the Aquino administration.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Casco

World finally wakes up to bird flu threat

SINGAPORE—AFTER TREATING bird flu as a largely Asian problem, the world is now waking up to the danger that millions of people could die from a pandemic if drastic counter-measures are not put in place.

US President George W. Bush has called for an "international partnership" against the threat with the dreaded H5N1 virus now creeping into Europe, and researchers are stocking up on flu medicines as scientists search for a vaccine.

The fear is that the H5N1 virus in domesticated poultry and migratory birds will develop into a strain that is easily transferable among humans.

Experts fear there will only be a window of a few weeks to contain an outbreak before a pandemic virus spreads with lethal speed.

Indonesia's health minister Siti Fadilah Supari on Wednesday warned the country was facing a bird flu epidemic as was more possible victims, both young girls, died after showing signs of infection, following four confirmed deaths from the virus.

"Inevitable is a strong word," Bob Dietz, a spokesperson for the World Health Organization (WHO) Pandemic Response Team in the Asia-Pacific region, said when asked about the probability of a pandemic.

"But the virus is so widespread at the point that we would be irresponsible not to prepare as if the situation is indeed inevitable," he told by e-mail.

"No one can quantify the probability of a pandemic strain of influenza emerging, but over time the likelihood seems so high that for the sake of preserving global health we must treat it as just that—'inevitable.'"

The WHO has been warning about avian flu for more than 18 months and welcomed strong US involvement in the battle against the menace. It has been helping Asian countries develop national counter-measures.

In a regional meeting Wednesday in New Caledonia, the UN health agency's Asia Pacific monitor countries approved a strategy to counter emerging diseases including bird flu.

Dr. Shigeru Omi, WHO regional director, warned that the plan could not be carried out without the help of wealthier nations and urged Asian countries to change their farming practices to prevent the spread of the virus.

The latest avian flu outbreak was detected in South Korea in late 2003. It has now hit 11 countries, with the H5N1 strain killing 63 people in Southeast Asia so far, including the two latest deaths in Indonesia.

But the current death toll would be a mere blip compared to a pandemic. AFP

NOT SO DEMURE DA VINCI

A painting called Mary Magdalene, which leading art historian Carlo Pedretti of the University of California believes may have been painted by Leonardo da Vinci together with one of his pupils, is seen in a handout released Sept. 22. The painting, measuring 58 cm by 45 cm, was believed to have been painted in 1515, four years before the master died. REUTERS

Worst-case scenarios: 7 to 100 million dead worldwide

PARIS—A WORLDWIDE PANDEMIC FROM A mutated bird flu virus could kill anything from seven to 100 million people, according to worst-case scenarios being studied by the World Health Organization and nations.

WHO #1 official warning of when, not if, the virus goes worldwide, the race is on to work out how to contain a devastating pandemic.

A strain of bird flu known as H5N1 has killed at least 60 people in Southeast Asia since it resurfaced in 2003, the majority in Vietnam, and led to the slaughter of millions of birds and poultry flocks.

But it could cause a pandemic if it mutates into an infectious human form, in a scenario eerily similar to the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918-1919 when a new strain emerged to which people were not immune.

At the time the virus spread around the world within six months and killed up to 50 million people.

Two other flu pandemics erupted in 1957 and 1968, killing four million and two million people respectively.

So far, bird flu has not adapted to an infectious human form. Although dozens of people have died, there is no evidence yet that the virus has yet passed from person to person.

"It's obvious that a pandemic will occur, all the conditions are in place. The problem now is time," WHO director-general Lee Jong-wook said this week.

If scientists does mutate into the 21st century's first pandemic, it could sicken 25 percent of the world's population, with nearly 30 million people in need of hospital treatment and a quarter of those eventually dying, according to forecasts in Science magazine by Ilkka Henrobi and another WHO expert.

His predictions are among the most optimistic, as many others Gretchaus and other French experts warned in May.

"The most conservative estimates open on seven to 8 million dead but 50, or in the worst case 100 million, would neither be enormous," WHO's regional director Shigeru Omi warned last year.

The estimates are mainly based on the mortality rate—two percent of the sick—in the Spanish flu pandemic, while also taking into account the rise in the world population, improved health care and changing travel patterns. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Sheehan in Washington

WASHINGTON—Antiwar protestor led by Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a soldier killed in Iraq, descended on Washington ahead of a demonstration scheduled for Saturday and three weeks after ending a long protest outside President George W. Bush's Texas ranch. Sheehan rose to fame after spending much of August camped outside Bush's ranch trying in vain to meet with the president to demand an explanation why her son, army specialist Casey Sheehan, 24, was killed. Sheehan said her group, Gold Star Mothers for Peace, has been "greeted with overwhelming support, in blue (Democratic) states and in red (Republican) states." The protesters, gathered under the banner "Bring Them Home Now," are "going to show Congress and the administration that we mean business when we say we want peace," she added. Sheehan set up Camp Casey—named for her son killed in Baghdad in April 2004—just blocks away from the White House. AFP

EU backs off on Iran

VIENNA—The European Union has backed off from its attempt to have non-proliferation upheld before the UN Security Council over its nuclear program, according to a draft EU resolution read to AFP Thursday. The EU earlier in the week had been calling overtly for Iran's immediate referral to the Council in order to bolster efforts by the United States, experts later weapons work. But this was opposed at a meeting in Vienna this week of the UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board of governors by Russia, China and nonaligned nations who know that Council actions against them could escalate into calls for trade sanctions that would drive black institutions from the oil patch. AFP

Protest in Basra

BASRA, Iraq—Iraqi police staged an angry anti-British protest in Basra on Wednesday as London and Baghdad sought to quell tension over a British raid to free two undercover soldiers held in the southern city. About 200 policemen who work at the police station and jail damaged during Monday's British raid marched through the streets, calling for the city's police chief to be replaced for the "British terrorists" to be returned to Iraqi jurisdiction. British forces raided the jail to free two undercover soldiers who were detained by Iraqi security forces following a firefight and bombing. In the raid, British armored vehicles crashed the walls of the prison's inner, rescued the men. The British said the men were held by a militia group also being held custody of three from police. But Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr told the BBC the men had never left police custody, and were not handed to militants. Reuters

Mexico minister killed

MEXICO CITY, Mexico—Mexico's public security minister, a key figure in the war against drug cartels, was killed along with eight others on Wednesday when his helicopter crashed in fog in mountains near the capital. Rescue workers found the charred remains of Ramon Martin Huerta's helicopter six hours after contact was lost early this a flight from the capital to a high-security prison. In a televised address, President Vicente Fox vowed to push on with his fight against violent gangs running drugs into the United States. "Today, more than ever, I reject the cowardliness of the government and of the nation to build a safe Mexico, of justice, peace and freedom," he said. Fox said the crash was "clear" but he added: "Martin Huerta was one of the president's closest aides and an old friend. Reuters

Bush waives rights sanctions on Saudi, Kuwait

WASHINGTON — PRESIDENT George W. Bush on Wednesday waived sanctions against Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Rwanda which the United States had earlier criticized as among the world's worst offenders in perpetrating human trafficking.

The presidential determination issued as a memorandum to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice waived sanctions against Rwanda and Saudi Arabia because it was in US interest to continue democracy programs and security cooperation on the war on terrorism, an administration official said.

In the case of Ecuador, a full waiver of sanctions was granted because it was in US interest to strengthen Ecuador's democracy and support its efforts to combat trafficking in narcotics and people, the official said.

In June, the State Department in its annual report on human trafficking downgraded Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to the lowest level of compliance in efforts to fight human trafficking.

The Gulf allies had provided logistical support for the 2003 US invasion of Iraq and have oil resources important for the United States.

The State Department human trafficking report put them into the lowest category called Tier 3, in which countries may be subject to sanctions including withholding of US aid that is not for humanitarian trade purposes, if they do not improve their records in three months.

The presidential determination said Cambodia, Venezuela, Bosnia, Cuba and North Korea should be sanctioned for "continued failures to comply with the act's minimum standards and failure to make significant efforts to comply" the administration official said.

Bolivia, Jamaica, Qatar, Sudan, Togo and the United Arab Emirates were determined to have made "significant efforts to comply" with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act since the State Department released its report, the official said.

That effectively removed those countries off the lowest level of Tier 3, the official said. Reuters

US/UN

Distressed US jet makes dramatic emergency landing

LOS ANGELES — A US AIRLINER WITH 146 people on board made a dramatic but safe emergency landing Wednesday amid a hail of sparks and smoke after its nose wheels jammed wildly out of alignment.

The JetBlue Airways Airbus A-320 with 140 passengers and six crew on board touched down gently on Los Angeles International Airport's runway 25 at 4:39 p.m., with its front wheels locked 90 degrees to the left.

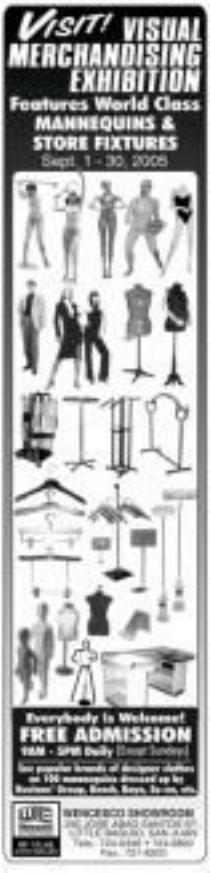
Sparks, flames and a pall of thick smoke erupted from the rims as they scraped along the tarmac, as scores of fire engines and ambulances raced alongside the stricken plane that had taken off from nearby Burbank airport three hours earlier bound for New York's John F. Kennedy airport.

But while the tires from wheels never straightened, the flames quickly died down and passengers began disembarking normally using rolling stairways a few minutes after it came to rest on the tarmac.

"JetBlue Airways is very happy to report that flight 292 landed safely at 4:19 p.m. and we have no initial reports of injuries to either customers or crew," airline spokesperson Sue Jacobs told AFP.

After the harrowing landing, the plane's emergency slides were not deployed. Instead, they walked down the stairs were found to be taken away for medical checks.

"I'm quite relieved," passenger Mike Hirsch told NBC4 television, adding that passengers had been warned to brace for a rough landing. but had remained calm. AFP



INQUIRER

OPINION

Divided loyalties

EDITORIAL

CONSULAR REPORTS, AS OUR HISTORY SHOWS, are one of the mainstays of the diplomatic profession. More often than not, they are cobbled together from news reports, opinion columns and editorials, and coffee-shop talk and the occasional one-on-one meeting, whether at cocktail parties or behind closed doors. The views they represent are the pooled opinions (fancifully called "analysis") of diplomats scrambling to prove to the home office that they're doing more work than merely processing visas and attending each other's national day receptions.

When a diplomat in Manila writes to higher ups in Washington reflects what his boss cares about, and unless the information was obtained by bribery, intimidation or some other form of shadily agency it is intelligence and not espionage. When those documents, in turn, find their way back into Filipino hands, through the activities of a Filipino working for the Americans, then that is espionage, since acquiring those documents involves breaking American laws and national security regulations. When a Filipino citizen is implicated in the process, then the Philippine government is obligated to come to the assistance of the Filipino in distress.

But what concerns us here is a curious process that has been going on. When are the repercussions when reports filed by US officials from Manila end up being read by Filipinos who happen to figure prominently in those reports? If the American economic and other diplomatic reports intercepted by Filipinos demonstrate just what exactly the United States is interested in, and more so, what or who the United States thinks are in a position to further American strategic and economic interests, then the behavior of the Filipinos reading such reports is instructive.

Instructive of what? Instructive, first of all, of just how executed American official opinions and policies are to our politicians. Instructive, too, as to how politicians—and up cuts/during their moves not only according to domestic political considerations, but also according to their interpretations of the US government's interpretation of the political scene.

A good case in point is former President Joseph Estrada, who hasn't been shy about admitting that he was the recipient of e-mail from Michael Ray Aquino. As the FBI reports themselves (as reported in this newspaper) indicate, around the time President Macapagal-Arroyo's troubles began, US Embassy officials were telling the home office that Estrada remained popular among the mass and remained an aura of legitimacy among the people.

Here we have US officials saying Estrada is popular. Estrada reads what they are saying about him and very sonny announces that he is prepared to resume leadership of the country, and proceeds to dramatize his preparedness by shuffling papers on his desk, saying he's being briefed by experts. Our readers recall that time, but it is only now, after we are made aware of official US diplomatic reports ending up on Estrada's desk, that the timing of his actions makes some sense. Estrada the actor was playing not to the mass gallery as was generally presumed. He was trying to attract Washington's attention—a political "Yoohoo, I'm here!" of the first order.

At more and more of past American political analysts get revealed, a greater scrutiny of those documents has become very important. The exercise is useful not only to decipher where America's interests lie (those interests have always been clear enough), security assessments and using our defense alliance as a foil to rival powers such as China), but to learn how shallow the loyalties of some our politicians tend to be.

Yesterday we observed that Vice President Noli de Castro would have done better had he showed the Americans the door rather than allowing himself to be subjected to what sounded very much like a job interview. Now we go one step further and ask the beneficiaries of stolen American intelligence reports: If the real objective of stealing them wasn't to help our country but only to find ways for America to help you, how can the country trust you? How can you serve the country when you are already serving two masters—your ambition and Uncle Sam?

Don't let Gonzales malinger at Heart Center

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE TROUBLE WITH LIVING IS THAT AFTER you tell one lie, you have to tell another to cover up the first one, and after that, you still more and more lies to cover up for each succeeding lie. After a good cross-examiner, you get entangled in the contradictions of your lies and you are caught.

That's what happened to National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales at the Senate drug hearings hearing the other day, for which he was cited in contempt of the Senate and detained. But he still managed to pull a fast one on the senators by getting himself confined to a hospital in view of the Philippine Heart Center instead of in the Senate, allegedly because of high blood pressure and low blood sugar.

Gonzales will probably malinger at the Heart Center where he is free to be visited by family friends, supporters and officials and members of the Senate—as much as possible including the President herself by being a loyal gang member and not turning on the others, just like Mafia gangsters observing their vow of silence, or omerta.

Individuals with high blood pressure will tell you that it does not matter more than an overnight stay in a hospital to get your blood pressure back to normal. There are now so many medicines to lower blood pressure in addition to the old reliable ones. And if you have a bout of mild weak will after your blood sugar went to 50 minutes...

Doctors should not allow themselves to be used as tools a mockery of the law and the senate. They should hand a medical certificate, not one that is an excuse to save a friend from embarrassment.

Let's face it. Gonzales has been an embarrassment to the Arroyo administration ever since he joined it.

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It is also an old trick of rich and influential prisoners to pretend to be seriously sick in order to get humanitarian detention. And that is the trick that convicted rapist former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos is using to get an excuse to LEAVE—where he made so much in his absence in Zamboanga in election elsewhere—to pardon him.

Jalosjos, that notorious guy, has chosen confusion and also darkness and should be returned to his cell in Muntinlupa where he belongs. He went on plant sweet potato and other but was due to only waive a week now, that say, there's a justification to set free a rapist on a child?

If he can play tennis twice a week, he's in no danger of dropping dead from a heart attack if he doesn't overexert himself. As for his diabetes, a low-carbohydrate diet should be able to control it. In fact, if Jalosjos was correct with prison food instead of having his own cook in prison or in the hospital, he would have no excuse for his diabetes. Prison food is notorious for low in almost everything, but except for its cholesterol and sugar content.

"Baka dapuan ng insulin" (you'll be sorry just die here)," said comparative prison officials.

But Jalosjos has been sentenced to real life terms. So it is natural to die in prison.

He has been convicted of rape—of a child—for which the penalty for prison and has influential convicts is usually death. But because he is a congressman, he got away with rape like terms. He has not even served one life term yet and they already want to set him free. He has served only eight years, **practically the equivalent of just a day on the term for rapists.**

How many poor prisoners have been executed and are awaiting execution for the same offense? So many. Jalosjos was lucky he got only seventh terms to prison, he is treated like

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a guest, with his own cook, his own cell, a big TV set and other home appliances. He built his own mini-mansion inside. And now because HE went in his diabetes, they want him set free after serving only nine years.

Plain is not for short reporters, Jalosjos' name would have been consigned to the list of selling 76-year-olds to be given executive clemency although Jalosjos is only 64 years old.

Don't think that I am being unkind to Jalosjos. My point here is that there should be no double standard of justice, one for the poor and one for the rich. The difference in the different crimes are made by law so to watch the people not to commit the same offenses.

Rape ranks with murder as a heinous crime. Some people think rape is even worse because it is more insidious. Murder is often replete in get off easily, won't that encourage more rapes?

Don't feel sorry for the criminals. Feel sorry for their victims.

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Another criminally accused person being treated with kid gloves in our justice system is Imelda Marcos. It has been almost 20 years since she and her husband fled to Hawaii as refugee angry Filipinos whom they have abused for 20 years. We just heard of the most amazing story about the decision of mental law but Supt. 21. It has been many years since charges of forgiveness have been filed against her. But as of now she is still suffering from still on trial, she should have been imprisoned and her ill health cured by now. But she is known to still be out there making high scale of life as if Marcos is on the very dire straits of justice.

But back to Imelda now. She is still trying to hold on to her fabulous pieces of jewelry that she left behind when she fled. She decided today to make her case in the Supreme Court, trying to stop their sale at public auction by filing cases in court. And while her judge may not be versed enough to issue a restraining order, Imelda herself still remains an adversary ruling with her. Jewelry really does do such things to women.

On teaching the Nintendo generation

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

I TUNED TO BE EASIER TO TEACH THE JOB. In law class on criminal law and human rights, I began teaching late in 1994, the year I became a lawyer, and in my class on the Universities of the Philippines that took her what they were studying. Over the next decades, a visit no longer enough just to navigate the undulating judicial decisions, which are the daily grind of the practicing lawyer, requiring the mental facility and moving parts (where accuses knows readers normally use), as a 1970s vintage has, must rights update to the nomenclature of Major Philippine Supreme, to a material law era in many respect starting that the "journey" denoted a "journey" while "conflicts" or "flights" denoted "flights". If this topic was another session, I'd show a supervised photograph of the appointed Justices in their robes. And age where they were, bemused and surprised.

I do not mean to imply that anyone today's youth care less, but it's more because their minds work differently. We must not judge them by the metaphors of the generations used to describe those of the 1970s and early 1980s.

First, we have provided them only a sprint period by which to remember the past. Elsewhere in the world, periods of regulator were documented through much commission reports, named to the wars, e.g., South Africa, El Salvador or Argentina. We have deliberately avoided the words, believing it more expedient to forget. There was never any Justice, judicial or popular, to that dark chapter in our national life, and our collective psyche is forever bedeviled by the questions left unanswered.

Second, today's youth may be accused of done some sort of "remembering." Historically, societies have done their remembering through huge public monuments, around which nationalistic public rallies gather annually to mark important events. The French have the Arc de Triomphe, and the Filipino's giant castle we have our own, some of them imposing like Jose Rizal's in the Luneta and Andres Bonifacio's in Monumento, others a bit

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less so (I'm not quite convinced that the sculptor of Bonny Serrano's monument in Quezon City knew what he was doing). Even the Americans have the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam Memorial Wall. (Of Robert Clay Graves' Iwo Jima memorial in Arlington, Virginia, I'm not sure.)

Today's youth have no such monuments. Instead, they have the Internet, which is a vast, unorganized repository of information, like that sculptor of Bonny falling down the steps to the tomb. Most want to have its grand parades at Tiananmen Square, where he mobilized millions of people, or Red Square, where he ordered tanks to run over them. Instead, they have the Mall of Asia.

I doubt if these ways of remembering "convince" with the Nintendo or Playstation2 generation. The sheer passage of time may have established the mental framework for the younger generation to put another boring mind, long to speculate, about an historical meaning. Yet, primarily, the Nintendo generation is impatient with speeches and mass assembly in the streets. Most of the time, I have noticed, I address them in the age of "Speak-Boston," where the press public questions of the issue are answered in bottom, pull-down menu. The point is to be able to say as Bill Clinton did, "I feel your pain."

This is why my issues matter to both sides: I am to make the method my materials accessible. Last year, I brought my kids to the Ayala Museum, where they saw (in addition to the dioramas of Philippine history) a documentary on the martial law years. In their questions, I realized that after the "camera-ready" for the protection of direct source history (Reading Pandiganan) workers.

But that wouldn't have been a problem for the elders, because for us, it was okay for history to be boring and distant, remembrance for the past. Not for the future, assuming we reached because it would be "baked in the cake." The Nintendo generation is more demanding.

To what end, the elders were troubled with books without pictures, all the information presented in linear form, black-and-white text in times from left to right, top to bottom. The Nintendo generation, in valid observation that if you're able to read, that text is on the phone, not someone else's description of what happened. They want the facts, not someone else's spin-doctored summary. And while narrative is fine, they want to be able to see the evidence for itself. The older generation might have said here that that story is just one story, and a thinker based and personal, but the new generation says, "That's exactly why we want to hear it. That is what makes it authentic!" The older generation searched for evidence to reinforce before which the public trust how. The newbies seek personal causes by which they can stand fit in before cold and technology public. Older want to be true to a cause; newbies want to be true to themselves.

The Nintendo generation remembers less through codes-based media, or what the elders might see as thought. Hence the ought-to-tell-you. But one where kids play video games, they can and something, and by using their thumbs without a care, it did have any experience more connected inside their heads. This is why my kids love watching "The Matrix" and therefore have mastered and explain it to me.

Because aspects are this our youth wouldn't mind a return to the everyday personality more benign than in the 1970s, which became increasingly indifferent to serious ideas (so should I say) blindly surprised who mistook the glorious leader in the dimensions of ego, in times past. The kids know we abused they speak, but we must tell them more stories, and tell them stories better, if we expect them to remember. The future is in their hands, those specifically their thumbs. Judge Learned Hand said, "Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it."

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Local science for large disasters

THE EARTH PRODUCES A RELIABLE STREAM OF disasters: typhoons, floods, landslides, volcanic ashfalls, earthquakes and tsunamis. In every case, it is expected that a well-financed relief effort will be mounted from a western source. This impoverishes an educator made rare only by less effective; it might also make the country more vulnerable in the long run.

When a tsunami hit, the first impulse is to bring in First World experts. Russia is the latest patriotic stalkword by removing food, shelter and medical aid. It is just a matter of getting things done. Local people are there to help relief in wrap up the operations as soon according to the instructions/prescriptions of donor countries.

Not replacing the habits of one culture into another finding or installing systems can trigger not only a disaster but also a disaster in managing an the disaster itself, as happened in small fishing villages in the Philippines in late 1970s.

In 2004, Typhoon Nina wiped out the lives of hundreds wooden fishing boats in a group of neo-primitive Philippine communities. Relief agencies, both local and foreign, responded with generosity and, followed by "restoration" of the fishing fleet. The old boats, which lasted every few years, were replaced by standard, fiber glass versions with sound gasoline engines. At the time, this was considered a success story of a well-managed relief operation.

The fishing economy rebounded and those islands—but only for about 10 years. After that, the entire society collapsed. Over thousands of years, the culture had come to depend on the natural rule of how bodies. They were the mother of society, the ship's officers, magistrates and judges. Subservient fleets according to their goodwill and was supported by generations of sharing and trust.

After the relief effort, this complex human balance was replaced by a rush economy and the power to make decisions about what could delo out the rules, previous period. An entire culture was effectively destroyed by efficient relief.

This scenario has been repeated over and over in diverse contexts. The first impulse is to solve problems in the most established manner. But, lacking assured technological dynamism, the outcome is inevitably unsophisticated.

The solution seems simple: create and refine this small science content in regions at risk of disaster. The primary objective of these centers would be "normal" science, with attention and profiles that best fit into their local economies and ecologies. Small donation nationally appropriate ways to deal with the catastrophes now likely to affect them. In addition, local talent would be nurtured in its home context.

That philosophy would benefit places like New Orleans—as much as Phuket in Thailand. Indeed, while it might seem as though there would be no problem of cultural transposition in the case of the former Gaulins, an examination of the tragedy reveals otherwise.

It has been overwhelmingly observed that the worst hit people in New Orleans were poor African-Americans living in the city's low-lying districts. Today new, many of those have stayed districts simply lacked the resources to evacuate easily. But it is beginning to emerge that many of us perceived to stay in a social environment that they viewed rather than fleeing to safety, but for that, surroundings.

Critics also cite the diversion of infrastructure funds and Louisiana National Guard troops to Iraq as contributing causes to this emergency. These factors clearly played a role, but, overall, it

COMMENTARY

M.T. Gonzalez

is also a result of scientifically inclined people from the local community had been ignored in flood control and evacuation planning, the consequences of Hurricane Katrina would certainly have been managed more effectively. By contrast, the inappropriateness of manipulating troops from Iraq into an emergency rescue operation is obvious.

The fight against AIDS, a battle that depends heavily on social modification—highlights in part the clearest why the problem that identified our values local culture in general. Societal mechanisms simply cannot be adjusted without a deep, profound understanding of culture. And scientists are be merely transfer. A mess be scientific, then is, based on the best methods and models.

By this reason, there should be two points of center during a catastrophe. Groups of trained scientists—the "experts"—should be based on site or how to crowd second-order disasters. Then should many of them might not have studied the local culture, they can standardize provide guidance that have been informed by the world's most expensive infrastructure. At the same time, relief efforts should be supported by the indigenous center that is known and trusted by those in danger.

The implications of this approach extend far beyond disaster relief. A robust scientific establishment is the core of any economy and there will be no real economic recovery in the Third World without it. An investment in local science is therefore a direct infusion into a community's growth potential, one that eventually will extend to women with new breakthroughs. After all, nothing is better for democracy than a scientist working outside traditional institutions, solving a problem that will not leave her family.

Project Syndicate

A. T. Gonzalez is the lead scientist of Stratus Bene Corp. and was a senior principal with the US Republican Alliance (Ret.) in Puerto Agusto.

Poor Bert

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

NOOR BERT SCHEELE. I'M NOT REALLY ALL that surprised that his blood pressure should shoot up after that blistering interrogation he had to endure at the Senate. Wednesday.

Because, as I've been saying all along, as the saying goes, Gonzales had made many someone' blood pressure rise in kind, mainly by his refusal to answer directly the legislators' questions regarding the matters of his authority to enter into a treaties with a foreign lobby firm and the identity of the person or persons who gave the order to bug the late Senator Lorenzo Tañada's office. I suspect adding to the woes, we're upon was Gonzales' refusal to raise the hair and implicate the President in yet another scandal, one that smacks here's called "treasonous."

While he might qualify for a medal for bravery and scope for President for being willing to fall on a sword—or in his case step up his hypertension—Gonzales should really reconsider whether staying on as national security adviser is worth his health. Because, to put it bluntly, he's in a no-win situation, since valiantly taking on the brunt of the blame for the supposedly unethical, if not illegal, decisions made by their superiors is valiantly distancing himself from the decisions and from his admin.

I can imagine how his inner core and blood pressure might be rising with every word of bashing to stand up in defense of a boss who has already abandoned him to ignominy. That is not the way to reward such valor, if misguided, loyalty.

* * *

THIS is a theme that the Black and White discussion which will have not said "die" on his relationship finally arrive at the truth behind the Ombudsman scandal, has picked up on. In a statement, the group confirmed that after the Versatile contract for the locations, Gonzales was "instrumental" in the President's decision to extend him "not to worry about the funds to pay for the 'feasible contract (saying that) there's going to be a change in terms."

Well, Malacañang apparently belatedly realized that Gonzales' neck was sticking out too far for the sake of personal involvement. If not ultimate responsibility, for the arrangement. Just a day after Gonzales talked to reporters about the

"foreign donors," the President, in a 15 September press, denied any personal knowledge of or involvement in the affair, saying that "she does not micromanage contracts, leaving everything to her."

As the Black and White statements summarized: Indeed she did. She's left everything to Ben, including raising and hanging in the wind to cover up and be held accountable for something he could only have done as an extension of the personality of the President. He has received only the most meager support from the President. He is close to being accused of treasonous behavior. And for what? To save the interests of a President who stands behind nothing: not her own decisions and policies, not her Cabinet members, not the interests of the country.

In the wake of the President's shabby treatment of one of her closest advisers, the group appealed to the rest of the Arroyo Cabinet, pointing out that "who is next you will get, for defending the policies of the President is service to the country."

In these relatively tense, in the inner circle, particularly the replacements for the "Boys" (Black and White) has that critical scenario: "You will be asked questions you cannot answer, because of the confusion of the President you serve. You will be asked to defend policies the true nature of which has been kept from you by the President. You will be held accountable for things the President, and not you, should be held to account. The President will not be there for you. You will, and is prepared to do any disservice to any person, including members of her own official family, if it serves her interests."

* * *

AT A RECENT get-together of friends on matters political and social, we all agreed that Malacañang had essentially lost the public opinion battle in the case of the "Hello Garci" tapes. And the "tipping point" had been reached in turning the nation against GMA.

The Palace's arsenal count, led by Mike "Bi-zarre" Defensor, quickly got busy palming the maligned Cabinet members and officials, known collectively as the "Final Four," as "heroes" who had been dumped on their Presidents, betrayed her trust and took advantage of their proximity to power to garner accumulation against her administration.

And Filipinos, we agreed, react instinctively against those who "betray" or are suspected of disloyalty after all, our society has long been built on the foundations of family, where loyalty and loyalty are considered prime values.

What was needed, we agreed, was a campaign to "humanize" the image of the President. Should the "Boys 10" be humanized instead for being shoved to the President but loyal to the country and to their principles? What is the greater sin—to stay loyal to a leader who had abandoned her oath and ceased to serve the people, or to abandon your principles and continue to stand by for the greater good and her chair?

If the President cannot even "stand by her man (or woman)" in a time of crisis, it's extremely doubtful she would make her power for such relations accomplices to the political realities and history.

* * *

NOTES: Lawyer Jim Lopez, National Book Awards winner for three consecutive years, will be one of the speakers at the "For Better, For Worse: A Complete Guide to Investment" seminar-workshop at the Intercontinental Hotel Legaspi will talk on financial renewal in his book "The Rules of Marriage: Rules of Engagement."

Lopez is (happily) married to Lorna Lagasca, a former Miss Philippines, and they have three children.

For inquiries, call the Career for Global Best Practices at 843-7148 or 0917-5098482 or e-mail bestpractices@0000@yahoo.com.

Two historic structures

LOOKING BACK

Anabelle R. Ocampo

DESPITE A HEAVY DOWNPOUR EARLY YESTERday morning, the welcome rain during the sidewalk opening of a small building named for Filipino's cultural treasure at the entrance of the US Embassy chancery building on Roxas Boulevard. A small group of old-timers, like H. James Hayes, S.J., and Mrs. Josie Lichauco, came to witness the simple commemoration that brought back memories of the old Philippine Commission's building at the same spot. Surely, old timers know the place when it was still the US High Commissioner's residence, a time when the now famous historic promenade was still known as Dewey Boulevard.

The Philippine Commission was the agency for the baroque tastes of some people—as its name implies—and housed ordained Bust Manila they has been witness to a lot of history. Most Filipinos are familiar with an adjacent building that contains other offices, including that of the Philippine Consulate General. But few realize that the "Bureau of Right" because it is there, whether a visa is issued or not, that you have different types of rights from designed to exposing. The chancery is much bustling is the historic structure whose long-story is maintained by an NHI marker unobtrusively.

"This building opened in 1846 to house the offices and residence of the US High Commissioner to the Philippines Francis H. Sayre. During World War II, Japanese Imperial forces occupied this building until the end of the war. On behalf of the Japanese government, Ambassador of the Philippines on October 14, 1943 when a lessee the Japanese Embassy in the Philippines. The US Army's 12th Cavalry liberated the compound on February 20, 1945 following intense fighting during the Battle for Manila. After the war, the old house itself served as the chancery for the World War II War Crimes Trials of Japanese in the Philippines. Following the United States recognition of Philippine Independence on July 4, 1946 the building became the chancery of the Embassy of the United States of America."

Unlike the previous lot of large dollar-ers, Joseph Mannarelli, whom we 'dive President, I think, purposely refers to as "Mr. Ambassador," the present charge Dan Lindsay is to see it a Filipino-Spanish style, impressive or may amiable. Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay have gone after the Embassy's offices and museums, leading some people to remark that they have seen more of them in one month than they did of former US Ambassador Francis Richardson in the three years he was posted in Manila. Nevertheless, we have to give credit to Richardson and former Public Affairs Counselor Ben Pon whose interest in RP-US history led to the installation of these markers on ordinary buildings in Manila and Baguio.

The US ambassador's residence in Ganay John Hay may not be as well-known as the museums in Manila, but it has a lot of history (and ghosts?) behind it. The mother installed by the National Historical Institute there, as part of the centennial celebration of the end of World War II in the Philippines. [Article]

"The building was completed in 1900 to serve as the summer residence of the US High Commissioner of the Philippines. During World War II, Japanese military and political leaders occupied the residence from December 28, 1941, until April 27, 1945, when Allied Forces and Filipino guerrillas liberated the city of Baguio, forcing the Japanese to withdraw into the surrounding mountains. On September 2, 1945, as the Japanese surrendered to Allied forces in Tokyo, Commander of the Japanese Army in the Philippines General Tomoyuki Yamashita emerged from hiding in Baguio to surrender and was brought to Baguio. In that building on September 3, 1945, at 12:00 hours, Lieutenant General *Sir Arthur Edward Percival*, Commander of the Japanese Army in the Philippines, formally surrendered to United States Forces represented by Major General Edmund D. Leavey, Deputy Commander of the United States Army Forces, Western Pacific. The Japanese delegation was led by Yamashita, while completed the surrender of all Japanese Forces in the Philippines and officially ended the war here. Since 1946, the US Embassy has used the residence for meetings, receptions and social events.

Now the residence is a very comfortable and relaxed place with a fabulous view of the mountains. There are new paintings by National Artist Fernando Amorsolo in the three years he was posted in Manila. Interestingly, we have to give credit to Richardson and former Public Affairs Counselor Ben Pon whose interest in RP-US history led to the installation of these markers on ordinary buildings in Manila and Baguio.

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Noli and George

I WAS COUCHING AS I READ ABOUT TAKUO FUKUDA, the man of investigative reports on Thai Premiers Noli de Castro, with the seemingly distant secret surveillance and "secret service" that exceeded those managed Arroyo.

One passage in the first page report, dated July 11, was particularly striking: "There is no indication De Castro has much knowledge or interest in foreign policy issues."

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

It was this part that got me thinking. "Said, I long past pardon gone. Are we not to know this about your president, George W. Bush, know about foreign policy issues . . . or, for that matter, about anything at all in the United States or in the world?"

Branching Out words

The US report, apparently based on unnamed sources and other articles, claimed that out this President was unable to answers many of their questions. Asked about his longshot priorities, the report said they had no "weak proficiency at his undisclosed world."

I guess they're not used to having to wait with Bush, who is quick to answer questions. Reporters at Bush don't have any several theories that specialize in subverting possible quotes from him. I'm going to share some of those" Bushisms," mainly gathered from the online magazine Slate, as we figure out how to compare to what we see this fall.

Before Bush was elected president, he was asked how he would react to a crisis in Taiwan. He was his reply: "That's a fundamental question is. Well, I'm a successful president when it comes to foreign policy? I will be, but until I'm the president, it's going to be hard for me to verify as I think I'd be more effective."

He did make it into the White House and has been a source of endless gaffes and laughs. He's called the Greeks "Greatians" and thought "literature" was the language spoken in Mexico.

More clips of the master? Maybe. Bad grammar and syntax? Maybe, as we see in this session that Bushism: "Economy good does are getting out of the business. Too many Fifth-Fifth aren't able to practice their love with women all around the country."

And what about the time when he asked the visiting Brazilian President Fernando Cardoso: "Do you have blacks, too?"

Some of the Bushisms suggest this man knows little, and the facts he knows, he can't distill cleanly. We see this, certainly in his views about the world, simplistically defined in terms of good and evil as we see in this game of a quote in the Washington Post, May 31, 2000:

"This is a world that is much more uncertain than the past. In the past we were certain, we were certain it was us versus the Russians. And in the past, there was certainty that we had large nuclear arsenals aimed at each other to keep the peace. There's what we were certain of . . . You see, even though it's an uncertain world, we're certain of some things. We're certain that even though the 'evil empire' may have passed, that there's still evil. We're certain that people that don't agree with what America stands for . . . We're certain there are murderers in this world, and there's terror, and there's pain, also and I'm certain of this, too: I'm certain to maintain the peace, we better have a military of high morale, and I'm certain that under this administration, morale in our military is disappointingly low."

Bush certainly isn't a man of few words. That Bushism was made even before 9/11, which helps us understand why some can be dragged the former Texan, and subside "swallow of the willing," including the Philippines' 88 troops, in a to a wild goose chase for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Intuition

The US report recounts a visit to Noli de Castro: "He inquired about the biography of *Homer Sees Bush* (*Homer Bush Cousins* among map) a small stack of books on De Castro's desk and got the book. He then took a pile and he didn't read it."

The insinuation here is that this was a man who wasn't be able to govern because he doesn't read. But we would ask, see, about George Bush, not just whether he reads, but whether he knows how to read. Words mix dollars to spend but and you'll find he stumbles all the time even with the simplest words.

In the instances to him, there have been reports that George Bush a dyslexic, which is a reading disorder where one get letters mixed up. But again, one has to ask, dyslexic or not, does the president really have to know about anything?

Let's get it straight: he does want to read. In from Undersecretary Ben Pon, he was advised by reporters that he read big letters and he replied, "I read the newspaper."

Evan Thomas, writing in a recent issue of Newsweek, offer this bit of information: "It is not clear what President Bush does read or watch, aside from the occasional biography or workout on one of [CNN's] hotel exercise bikes."

No doubt, Bush's taste in the acquisition of knowledge does reading, but I have very real issues that the world's fate lies in the hands of a man who has such a diplomatically disaffected history, another online magazine, as "mixed bag."

Because he has such a hand-down of the world, it is unlikely he cares to read memos or to listen to people other than those who share his views.

The world of massive incompetence, displayed time and time again in his initial responses and in his bungling on domestic issues, the most dramatic being the disastrous disaster management around the storm Katrina. In many other countries, citizens would have demanded his resignation. But Americans seem to be a tolerant and forgiving lot.

Which is how they will probably treat Bush when he runs with his dream-ticket 2010 because we're so afraid of getting him at presidents. Maybe there are good reasons for that but we really sure, I'm someone like Bush could get elected, and re-elected, presidents of the United States, if you're much closer that number will get by in spite of both preceding to protect.

But, since we're not voting for Bush, Americans should worry, "how would get good advisers." But really now, I don't even agree that Bush has competent men and women around him. What he has is a bunch of drunken hacks who evaded military service but now sends off America's young men and women to be slaughtered in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Better to have Noli de Castro as your friend. The problem is we seem to have devised "better" means for certain measurements of incompetence in government.

Something light

This has nothing to do with politics. Tomorrow Dr. Margy Holmes is launching a revised edition of her controversial book "A Different Light" at Powerbooks, SM Megamall. The new one is greatly presented to go and give my thoughts about the book and what's happened in the last 10 years since it was published. That's tomorrow at 3 p.m. Yes, the public's invited. And we can check if Powerbooks has a copy of "The Happy Prince and Other Stories" as well as to be Oscar Wilde's multicolored book. While Angelo Lacuesta's not the right artist, it's the only book for readers children whatever his/her schools.

Comments are welcome at mcantan@pacnet.com.

How to get a 'tsunami of retirees' to move to the Philippines

THE CLAIM THAT THE PHILIPPines is "the most hospitable, English-speaking country in the world" (PDI, 9/5/07) is debatable.

Not debatable is the statistic of tourism that would follow a million influx of retirees here. For example, if only one percent of the 36 million Americans now retired took the Philippines up on its offer—that is, 360,000 retirees each receiving a (US) pension of, say, $15,000 a year—more than $5 billion in new money would begin pouring into the Philippine economy every year.

The rush Mexico, third and a dozen other sub-tropical havens in Latin America know how to roam, too. Each has nice things to offer so that it can get a bigger piece of the American retirement pie.

Let's face it, almost anywhere the $15-dollar is worth five times in purchasing power. Be it isn't just about money. What gives Latin America a huge advantage over the Philippines, in my opinion, is its proximity to the United States and, therefore, to Medicare-accredited American health care facilities which, in some cases, are just an hour away by plane.

With their health care delivery capability, the world-class medical centers in Manila and Cebu are "qualified" for such accreditation to say the Medicare insurance powers-that-be in the United States.

The option for nearly 100,000 Americans currently retired in the Philippines is either to pay for their health care needs out-of-pocket, or spend 24 hours on a plane to get to the nearest Medicare-approved facility in the United States.

This is a problem that not only discourages more Americans from choosing the Philippines over Latin America. According to its screen business extension Encore Dolidora, it is also a problem that keeps almost 400,000 US dollars who could be Medicare-eligible from spending their retirement years here.

This is a situation that the Philippine health care community, the government and others need to get on top of, before the "tsunami of retirees"—offering a potential of billions of dollars in new money and thousands of jobs in new ancillary businesses—starts to wash over the Philippine shores, nurses and hospitals, and the Philippine economy, in general—washes up on somebody else's beach.

—ELLIOTT LOVEDEON,
PO Box 2750, Ocampo City

Top 600 women?

THE PRO ADVERTISEMENT, "MESSAGE TO the Congressmen: From Over 600 Top Independent Women in Civil Society," which started appearing in the business last August, has caught the attention of our group, the Women of Bayan ng Mangagawa.

The organization of the ad clearly belong to a very small group of well-known and affluent women in Philippine society. It is in their best interests that the status quo remains. But not to the majority of poor and discriminated women whom feminist have been pointing were such the President Macapagal-Arroyo remains in Malacañang.

The continued rule of the elite in this country has made the lives of poor women an endless struggle with hardships, hunger, poverty and oppression. Their confidence in life will definitely be lower still if the government makes significant changes in its economic policies—like higher budget allocations for economic and social services, such as health care, childcare, livelihood programs, etc.

However, the Arroyo administration has stood its ground and has opted to pursue anti-poor policies—IMF implementation, bigger budgetary allocation for debt servicing at the expense of social services, and the privatization of public utilities such as power and water, among others.

In addition, the political dregs that had hounded the Arroyo administration for the past several months now has been left unbothered with the death of the impeachment complaints. The issues of cheating and betrayal of public trust are far superior to the issue of admissibility of evidences and all other technical and procedural issues. Thus, Ms Arroyo does not have any right and duty to serve out a term stolen from the Filipinos. For as long as the spirit in Malacañang, the Philippines will never be given genuine respect by the community of nations.

But, indeed, Ms Arroyo has been a real blessing in the face of the Ostrobet, Montenegro, Cojuangcos, Monteverdes, Nicholsons, Puritanos, Imperials, De Venes and hundreds of others in "civil society." To the poor majority of women, however, the Arroyo administration has been a never-ending nightmare.

—ROSARIO CEDIL BOLOSON,
secretary general,
Labor Party-Philippines,
33 Road 3, Project 6, Quezon City,
info@partidongmanggagawa.org.ph

Sincere activists from high society

MANUEL L. QUEZON III'S CARICATURE OF how high society has a new, favorite and fashionable pastime was very disturbing and a sad commentary from a writer I normally respect and admire. (PDI, 9/8/07)

I do not have any idea as to who these activists, who talked and acted the way Quezon described in his column, were. I am a mestiza and proud to be one. There are many like me who are members of Bika I and Nanded Makati. We stood side by side with fellow Filipinos from all walks of life. More uplifting was our solidarity with the poorer barangays of Makati. We were not condescending, and never, never did we patronize our spectators with half-baked Spanish expressions.

Those who gave donations in cash and several sessions in Congress do so because they believe strongly in their cause. Those who sign manifestos feel just as strongly about their position.

We all love our country.

I agree with Quezon, however, that the time has come for us to agree to disagree and move on.

—ISABEL GAMBOA WILSON,
PO Box 1473, Manila

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Across the NATION

'Labuyo' leaves RP with 2 more deaths

A GIRL AND A BOY DROWNED AND TWO PEOPLE were missing in the wake of tropical storm "Labuyo," which gained strength as it blew through the northern part of the country toward southern China, officials said yesterday.

The Office of Civil Defense reported in earlier report Wednesday that six people had died in weather-related incidents.

The storm was renamed about 350 kilometers north of Manila at 5 a.m. Thursday—one minute west of the Calayan and Babuyan islands—packing winds of 85 kilometers per hour, and gusts of up to 100 kph.

The storm followed monsoon rains last week that flooded wide areas of Luzon and left at least eight people dead.

One of the worst hit areas was Lemery, eight in Solano, four in Bamban, and two each in Aliaga and Bulakan.

Its official level and Guiguinto in flood-residential and commercial areas near the city plaza, he said.

In Cagayan, a four-year-old boy drowned when he fell into a water-filled pothole at their backyard as strong winds and rains spawned by "Labuyo" battered Cagayan on Wednesday.

Reports identified the victim as Vincent Rivera of Barangay Dalupan in Sta. Praxedes town.

At least 34 villages in Cabanatuan, Gapan, Science City of Muñoz, San Jose City, Palayan City, Aliaga, Talavera, Guimba, Muñoz, Santa Rosa, Jaen, Cabiao, Gabaldon, Rizal, Laur, Bongabon, Gen. Tinio, Licab, Peñaranda, Quezon, Carranglan, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija, Bamban, Capas, Concepcion, Tarlac, Botolan, Cabangan, Masinloc, Palauig, Iba, Castillejos, San Marcelino, San Felipe, San Narciso, Zambales, Hermosa, Orani, Samal, Abucay, Bagac, Dinalupihan, Limay, Mariveles, Morong, Orion, Pilar, Balanga, Bataan, Subic, Olongapo, Bataan, Bataan, Bataan

Japan resumes forestry aid after lull of 28 yrs

NOTICE AND WARNING
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With respect to matters contained in this Warning Ad, interested parties may contact:

ATTY. HONRATUB P. CRUZ
Vice President and Corporate Legal Counsel
STEEL CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES
[illegible]

STEEL CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (STEELCORP)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—AFTER A 28-YEAR lull, Japan has resumed its support for major forestry programs in Central Luzon, environment officials said on Wednesday.

The Japanese government funded at least seven community-based reforestation efforts in the region out of six recently approved P880 million grants to the Philippines.

Rogelio de Leon, regional executive director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the Enhancement of Community-based Forest Management Project is the second that the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) is assisting after the Philippine-Canada Forest Development Project in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija in 1976.

In the past 14 years, Japan has financed limited trials of to reintroduce its disaster-mitigation projects in Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales, but the process died after it had fund by Mt. Pinatubo's eruption in 1991.

Ricardo Calderon, DENR regional deputy director for forestry and the training, policy-enforcement and reforestation components of the five-year project, would be undertaken countrywide until 2009.

Calderon said the project's five-year management support would be carried out in Central Luzon's seven model sites.

These are 16 hectares in Magalang, 3,000 in Bulacan Bulu, Angeles City at the boundary of the Clark Special Economic Zone; both in Pampanga; 900 has in two sites in Gerona Tarlac, Nueva Ecija; and 174 has in Botolan, 3,000 has in Santa Cruz and Subic in Masinloc, all in Zambales.

In a statement, Rohde Mendoza, Jica chief advisor, said these sites were selected from 22 proposed areas in five regions.

These sites, he said, have relative peace and order situation, supportive local government and active people's organizations.

De Leon said the task of reversing the trend of forest destruction that is linked with poverty required the DENR to forge partnerships with local government and community organizations, most of which are groups of indigenous tribes of Aeta and upland farmers.

He said the DENR pushed the project because only 85 percent or 832,476 has of 963,120 has of forestlands in the region had adequate forest cover as of 2003.

Under the project, forest management and information center as alternative employment to poor upland residents who are employed by illegal loggers supplying wood for the local construction and furniture industries.

Dennis Orejas, PIA Central Luzon Desk

Queen folk seek more time to retrieve logs

GENERAL SAMO, Quezon—Local officials, such furniture makers, charcoal producers and Church people in the Real-Infanta-General Nakar (Reina) area have collectively appealed to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to extend for another 30 days, or until Christmas season, the temporary suspension of the ban on the movement of forest products.

"Our people are just starting to recover economically and we still have to put up education livelihood activities. The rainy season has now started in our area, which will last up to the first quarter of next year, and fishing is very minimal due to big waves and rough seas," said part of the letter addressed to DENR regional executive director Antonio Principe by the Reina Multi-Sectoral Executive Committee on Illegal Wood Stock Removal, Utilization and Disposition.

The letter to Principe was handed to Emilio Morales, DENR regional technical director, and Wilfredo Reta, chief, forest resources conservation division, both of DENR-Calabarzon, during a meeting and dialogue here on Wednesday.

Mayors Hernando Arellanoda of General Nakar and Grace Asuncion-Obaldia and Vice Mayor Wilfredo Reta of local and local industry leaders attended the meeting.

On May 2, DENR-Calabarzon issued a memorandum allowing the retrieval and movement of logs and natural products in Quezon and Aurora for a period of 60 days as part of the government disaster preparedness program.

The retrieval period of the order will end on Oct. 2.

Antonio Sison, chief of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Real, reported that his office had collected a total of P757,500 forest charges since Aug. 3 from small kinds of lumber products that were transported out of the Reina area.

The indigenous Dumagat tribes in Sierra Madre have expressed the same moral argument for the extension of the suspension period.

Emilia Mallari Jr., PIA Southern Luzon Bureau

SMELLY TRADE
A woman buyer sorts durian along Aruda Street in Davao City. The durian season has begun in Davao City, but farmers say harvest could be better this year. Durian sells for P30-50 per kg during harvest season.

In Isabela town, use, sale of plastic bags now against the law

SAN MARIANO, ISABELA—SOON may be plastic bags' Fly going out of town.

Mayor Edgar Go and the town council have recently approved an ordinance banning the sale and use of plastic bags by all business establishments here.

Local officials said the ban was prompted by deliberations over the health and environmental hazards posed by plastic use.

Councilor Nenelly Castelar, chair of the council's committee on health and environment head, authored the ordinance.

"The use of plastic bags in business establishments contributes heavily to problems on health, sanitation and the environment," Go said.

He said plastic bags, because they are non-biodegradable, clog drainage and sewerage systems, litter the streets and pollute the environment as their mere presence has used disease in rivers.

Going native

Go said in place of plastic bags, the town is encouraging residents to use native packaging materials.

Residents, local officials said, may try using the indigenous silver system in packaging of carrying goods.

The silver refers to rying fish and meat using bamboo (bamboo slivers) or rattan, which are abundant in the town.

Go said there are also ranging residents to use bayong (native woven bag) and paper bags in carrying goods.

He said the town's market admin-

istrators and the treasurer were tasked with implementing the ordinance.

Enforcers

Violators will be fined P1,500 for the first offense, P2,000 for the second offense, and P2,500 and/or imprisonment of 15 to 30 days for the third and succeeding offenses, Go said.

San Mariano (pop. 41,309 as of 2000) is a first-class, coastal town. Illegal logging was rampant in the 1970s and 1980s.

Efforts to reduce the amount of non-biodegradable waste in the country have proven fruitless so far.

In Metro Manila, authorities are trying to implement a waste segregation program in which biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes would be separated by households before these are picked up by garbage trucks. Filomeno Vicoy Jr., PIA Northern Luzon Bureau

NDF orders increased offensive vs gov't

CAMSIC CITY—THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC Front (NDF) in Mindanao called on communist rebels to launch more offensive actions against government troops.

"We ask the NPA [New People's Army] units in Mindanao to launch widespread and extensive tactical offensives in the entire island against legitimate military targets," Jorge Madlos, NDF spokesperson, on Wednesday said in a statement.

He made the call after the prospects of the resumption of the peace talks continue to dim.

The NDF withdrew from the negotiating table when the United States branded the Communist Party of the Philippines as a terrorist organization.

Madlos also lament as Ka Oris, also urged soldiers, policemen and militiamen "to defend their sympathy and support to the people's movement ... in whatever manner and form."

Madlos said the offensive actions are in support of the nationwide effort to oust President Gloriapegal Arroyo.

He said there was a much-needed right to reject removal from office because of her "unchastised imposition" of martial law which at the same time gathering "enough muscle and justification" to be readily declared one.

Oris said the NDF will vigorously seek her ouster from power.

He said the effort to oust Ms Arroyo has now turned into an "intensifying fight." Oris said that a military rule can never prop her regime "that is based on collapse support now."

Comparing the situation that brought about the declaration of martial law in 1972 with the current political developments, Oris said the same could not "are necessarily manifesting" today some of which are "even worse in many respects than during the martial law years."

Ryan Rosario, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Truck firms urged to use GPS as means to thwart highway robs

CAMP FIGONTE LIM, Laguio—The Cabbarroyo police office has asked the association of trucking companies in the region to immediately install global positioning system (GPS) gadgets in their trucks to thwart hijacking and highway robberies, a police official said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Rodolfo Magdiwa, operations chief of the Cabbarroyo police, said that although the number of reported hijackings had declined in the past months, the threat was still high.

He said during a meeting with the truckers' group based in Cabbarroyo on Tuesday the advantages of putting up GPS units to deter any attacks was discussed lengthily.

Once installed, he said, the GPS would show the exact location of trucks at any given time.

Police operatives, he added, could even tell "if the driver is sleeping with the ignition of his truck on."

Magdiwa said that as a gateway to southern Luzon, Visayas and even Mindanao via the rail on-roll off system, thousands of trucks are using the major thoroughfares of Cabbarroyo everyday.

"If in case a truck is taken by criminal elements or during emergency, the police and its owner can easily detect where the truck is headed. That way, we can dispatch our police units to go after the truck or cases," Magdiwa told the bosses.

He said despite the availability of such technology in the country, the number of trucking companies that started using GPS in their units is still negligible.

The most common reason cited by companies, he said, was the supposed expensive prices of GPS units available in the market.

"But acquiring GPS is obviously much cheaper than losing your truck and its cargo. They would cost millions for their insurance," he said.

Magdiwa said aside from recommending the use of GPS, the police were also actively implementing the issuance of blue cards. Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE HONORABLE SENATOR JUAN PONCE ENRILE

Dear Senator Enrile,

We are grateful to you for taking up the cudgel for the used vehicle rebuilding industry. We are small Filipino businessmen who only want to do business in our own country. Unfortunately, a sector dominated by foreigners would want to kill our fledgling business right in our own country.

Mr. Senator, how lucky are the Filipino entrepreneurs and workers who started their small industry in Port Irene, Cagayan. Their senator is protecting them. Unfortunately, we in Subic are not only left to fend for ourselves. **Contrary to the stand of your fellow senator that our business is illegal**, the House of Representatives, thru the Committee on Transportation and Communication, and the Committee on Trade and Industry, issued Committee Report No. 2157 which ruled that "No Pertinent Law and Existing Law is violated by the bringing into the Subic Freeport and Special Economic Zone of right-hand-drive vehicles or by converting them into left-hand-drive as long as the conversion is made within the said Freeport Zone and in a facility accredited by the SBMA".

Mr. Senator, it is we who started and developed this industry. We have not asked for any incentives from our government. We merely ask that we be allowed to survive. But we have now started exporting rebuilt units to other countries, an achievement we can be proud of.

The vehicle rebuilding and auctioneering industry not only employs direct workers such as mechanics, electricians, tinsmiths, painters, drivers and upholstery makers, indirectly, they cause the employment of workers not only in the supplier industry such as parts and supplies, but also the downstream industry of fish, vegetable, meat, and rice traders who can only afford to buy second-hand pick ups, vans and trucks. Even construction companies cannot afford to buy brand new dump trucks at P7 Million but are able to buy used units at P650,000 only. All together, they employ 120,000 workers.

Even countries such as Chile, Russia, Vietnam, New Zealand, Dubai, and lately England import used vehicles. Are we richer than these countries that we have to force our countrymen to buy only brand new units?

The car assemblers say our activities should not be allowed in Subic or anywhere else because they foster smuggling, corruption and tax evasion. By the same logic or illogic, should their activities also be stopped because they also import parts and completely built-up units? Most of their certificate of registration does not indicate the certificate of payment number and the amount paid. They bring in "Semi-knocked down" vehicles when in factionly the tires and batteries are added. Thus, they pay only 3% for completely built-up units. We pay cash for duties and taxes while they are on "open account". Has the government checked how much they have liquidated?

In the spirit of equality and fair treatment, we should be allowed to co-exist with the car assemblers. Where, but only in our country, are it's citizens being discriminated against?

God bless you and our country!!!

The Used Vehicle Rebuilding and Auctioneering Industry of Subic

Paid Adv't.

LEL EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.

Salutes Our Unsung Heroes in the Field of Science.

The **LEL Educational and Development Foundation, Inc. (LEL-EDF)** was established in Manila in 2002 by Dr. Lim, together with his first children.

Having expanded on both joy and pain of being a JP Professor herself, Dr. Lim has created a policy of **LEL-EDF** to alleviate the financial burden of JP Professorial Chairs with patients dealing with Microbiology, Parasitology, Surgery, Infectious Diseases and Internal Medicine.

LEL-EDF is committed in providing an annual donation of Php 250,000.00 to the College of Public Health and College of Medicine of the University of the Philippines (UP), each (2004).

In line with the vision to propagate technology, **LEL-EDF** has deservedly provided rewards to the Research Award for Philippine Academy of Science and Technology, Research Award for Tropical Medicine and Research Award for Philippine Food Association from 2004 until 2008.

Bringing hope and future to the next generation, Dr. Lim has duly calculated his children, children which stand for his children. "The foundation will live on by an executive decree."

"To educate and uplift the standard of living"

The **LEL EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.** believes that amidst all the current political turmoil, social perplexity and economic instability that pervades our beloved country, the need to progress and move on deserves to be given its rightful attention, now more than ever.

For starters, the **LEL-EDF** has five good reasons to pave the way for such a noble undertaking: to recognize for their outstanding achievements in their respective field of scientific endeavors, the **LEL- EDF** proudly honors these five unsung heroes of our country.
After all, they deserve to be reminated by the mass of our deep gratitude and appreciation.

Dr. Prudencio T. Cinco

Dr. Roberto E. Coward

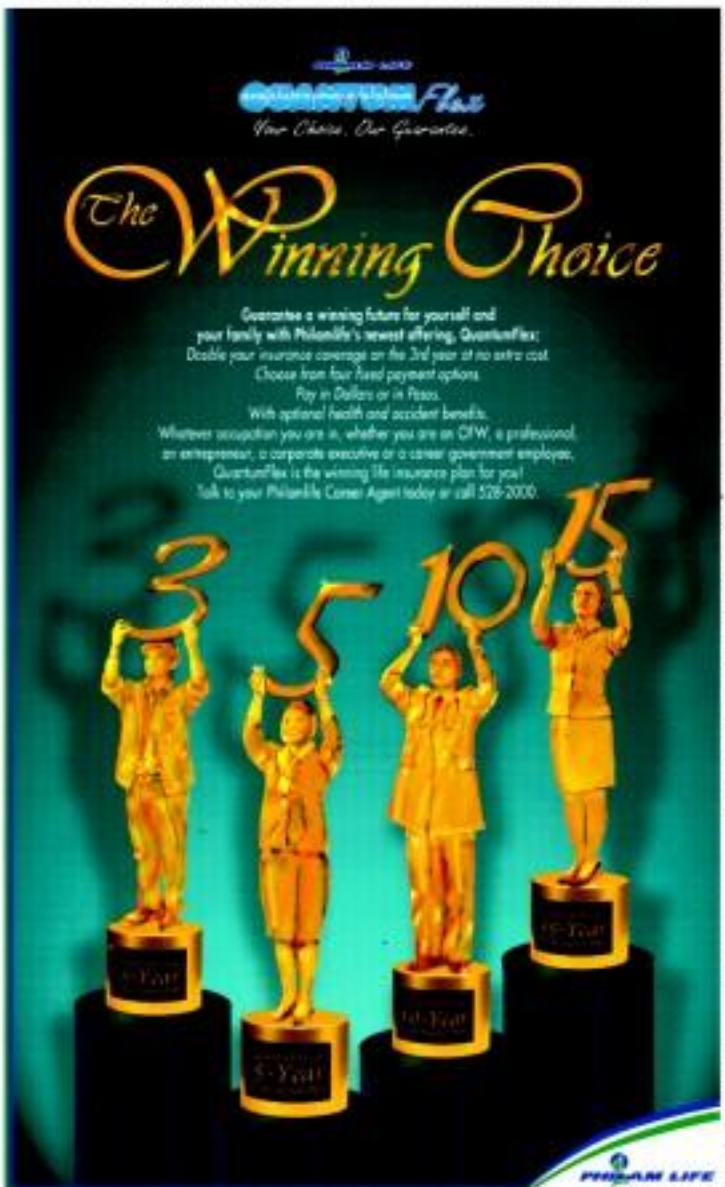
Dr. Wesly R. Rosario

Dr. Herman U. Gaba

For more inquiries, please contact:
LEL EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.
Rm. 201 Nakar Lay Palanga, North A. Mabini cor. Padre Gil, Ermita, Manila, Philippines

'Injustice' drove Jarque to join communist rebels

US deports Jarque and wife



GMA: The tough gets going

"We cannot let this continue."

ple and that undermines the rule of law," she said.

'Preemptive response'

On Wednesday, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the government was enforcing the "rule of law and preemptive response" in the face of imminent violence" following intelligence reports that some Senate forces would combine their destabilization moves until the end of the year. He said police would intensify efforts to "nip this in the bud."

In a speech before 15,000 members of the League of Barangays holding a regional meeting in Clark, Ms Arroyo appealed for help in rendering aid to her critics.

"Those who will support my ouster unity, they're welcome. Sit them who want and would continue to disrupt government, we, from the top to the barangay officials, will ensure the rule of law," she said to ensure application and disarm arrest. (Inquirer/Wendelyn Ng)

The officials represented the 3,301 barangays in Ms Arroyo's home region of Central Luzon. Senior Secretary Angelo Reyes said:

Ms Arroyo began her 36-minute speech, mostly in Pilipino, by congratulating the league for convincing Congress to approve the reschedoling of the barangay elections from October this year to October 2007.

She also thanked them for "demonstrating resolve in dealing with the challenges in the political system."

Unwavering focus needed

"The future of our country lies in the unwavering focus to apply the rule of law and the Constitution equally and fairly to all of our country's sins lies in our capacity to fight poverty and unemployment," Ms Arroyo said.

"We will achieve nothing if we shall allow those who sow disruption to disrupt us," the President said.

Instead of wavering, she urged the barangay leaders to help her in establishing those millions small enterprises that would create those million jobs and start two million agricultural centers.

The President announced that the growth rate for exports rose to 11 percent despite the slump in the world market. The peso, according to her, was strong in spite of the government's ballooning fuel import cost.

The unemployment rate, on the other hand, dropped to 7.7 percent, which is smaller, she said, than Germany's.

Ms Arroyo said her administration was now on its second wave of reforms for economic and political development.

"It demands double the energy, double the discipline and still as a time when we are held back by the unrealistic limits of the global environment and held back by such a dysfunctional political system," she said.

Militants denounce policy

"What the people want is a government that responds to their needs... Let's work together to fix our political system. Let's have more power, more capacity, more wealth in the hands of the people," she said.

Militant groups denounced the administration's pet tough policy.

"If martial law did not prevent people from asserting their rights, how much more this," said Renato Sorsoney General Secretary, echoing a position left-wing sentiments. "People will always create ways to circumvent this kind of [violent] measure. This will be challenged on all fronts."

Expressing Malacañang's announced policy on protests, Executive Nilda Quesol, chief of the National Capital Region Police, said it did not differ much from "maximum tolerance."

"It means the police will not just break up a protest. It means we will negotiate, and we will show step by step how maximum is employed," he said.

If protesters could not produce a rally permit, they would be requested to disperse, he said.

If they refuse to do so, the police will use "calibrated force" to disperse them, he said.

Malacañang's order has not stilled that, Quesol said. MTB reports from Philip C. Tubeza, Jaime A. del Prado, Blanche S. Rivera and Alexis Romo

US report details coup plotters' July meet

chaser of disgruntled AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) officials concerned by mounting a coup, but state retaliation may prevent them from moving to do so."

It was apparently referring to the "Oakwood mutiny" of July 28, 2003, wherein junior officers took over a building of several upscale towers in the heart of Makati City's central business district.

'Pilikto'

The report, sent of several supervisors of the US government, was obtained by the Inquirer, showed that detention agents were able to monitor a meeting of military plotters and to learn how personal currents were being industriously.

It is believed to be among the estimated 300 documents downloaded by Filipino-American intelligence analyst Leandro Aragoncillo from US Embassy computers of Internet-gained files, for which he is facing espionage charges along with former Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and Philippine Marine Col. Ariel Querubin.

The report said the "clandestine meeting" included a forum on "democracy" in the face between military might and politics, and how this fact supposedly been used by the Arroyo administration to the disadvantage of the AFP.

"[What was stressed were the] incursions within the branches of the Philippine military, specifically citing higher pay for police than military officers and differences in both policies and motivations among military officers," it said.

The report said that the legitimacy of the Arroyo presidency was challenged at the meeting, and that a call was made for "change, even violent change."

'Be prepared'

"Another point made was[the need to support the country] professing their allegiance to country and their country, [but] support for the government," it said.

The chair of the meeting reasoned the active officers "to be prepared to respond by abandoning their posts and encouraging their defiance of government control when the situation[,]" according to the report.

It said "a nebulous plan" was presented, "to effect chaos and unrest, allowing the establishment of a governing council led by responsible leaders."

The report said US Embassy officials had spoken with then AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu and were told that there were indeed "reports of grumbling in the military" (agents as part of a wider destabilization plot. Meanwhile, Malacañang has not proffered solid evidence that any plot is actually under way, nor who is behind it, although as recently have claimed that some retired officers were involved in some swearing for a destabilization plot..."

In a June 2 report attributed to then US Charge d'affaires Joseph Mussomeli, the US Embassy also offered rose groups looking to oust Ms Arroyo—one made up of field-grade and junior officers, and the other of "flag officers."

"The volume and frequency of rumors that a military coup to oust Arroyo is imminent have increased," The June 2 report said.

It was only in the July 30 report, however, that the US Embassy said it had taken previous rumors steps in the event of a coup attempt.

'Common fare'

US Embassy documents in the possession of the Inquirer, dated as early as February 2005, have mentioned coup reports and rumors, and dismissed them as "routine."

"My reception, however, that rumors of coup plots are pretty common fare these days," said an embassy report dated April 14.

It appeared that the US Embassy had been monitoring coup talk since early this year, when the political crisis had set to be triggered by allegations of rewarding jueting payola against members of the First family and the Virello Land" tapes.

"A few fringe politicos have engaged in wild fantasies about plans to seize power. There is a lot of rash talk on the streets, and it has caught the attention of the embassy," the April 14 report said.

It said that during discussions on political stability, Ms Arroyo seemed to take the coup rumors seriously.

GMA conduct

"[The President] expressed no doubts about the stability of these coup threats. Arroyo also made mention of previous, apparently innocuous, reports that had claimed destabilization efforts were imminent," the report said.

Arroyo appeared to listen closely to the opinions of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Defense Secretary Avelino "Boying" Cruz when the Cabinet debated threats to the administration," it said.

From the April 2 report, it appeared that US agents were discussing monitoring not only coup threats but also the conduct of the President's meetings with her Cabinet.

Gee, thanks, Uncle Sam; lucky pols mighty pleased

ed in a blue Hyogan Shell by police officers in civilian clothes.

Senators Manuel "Mar" Roxas, Richard Gordon and Ralph Recto admitted to being somehow flattered by the police assessment in the report.

Mr Roxas quickly added that these did not give much thought to how the Americans had been using them up.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, son of ousted President Joseph Estrada, wondered aside a hearty laugh at the assessment that he and his half-brother, Sen. Jinkie Mayor JV Ejercito, could make a run for the presidency on account of their father's enduring popularity.

"It's not for me, but for the 93 spirits to decide," said an appreciably inkled Jinggoy. "All pros, down-bellows it's destroy."

At any rate, he said, it was also "too early to decide" whether he would seek reelection or run for a higher office.

"Of course I'm happy that despite my father being in jail for four years, his popularity has not waned and has even improved," he said.

Roxas made a joking reply when asked about the assessments that he was "well-placed" for the 2010 presidential race based on his high name recall, his wealth and his "machinery," including his godfather, "Indefensible media mo" Norma Sanchez.

"Thank you," he said. "Now maybe they will approve my visa recommendations."

Sen. Richard Gordon, a neophyte senator, joked being interested in senatorial candidates "[with] things done" and who was "not afraid to get his hands dirty."

"I feel good about that in the sense that it justifies my family," said Gordon, a former Olympic swimming star whose father was the first republican Authority after the pullout of the US military bases, and an ex-tourism secretary.

But he said that as a whole and the numerous awards he had received as a public official were flowing.

"It's also good to be parsed on the landscape as a rabble, but asked is it important is you not a bad," he said.

Gordon said it was unfair for him to be described merely as pro-US basic or as an "American boy."

"I am not afraid of anyone, even Gloria (President Macapagal-Arroyo)," he said. "I have an American name and I'm proud of it, but [the Americans] know I can take off them off."

Gordon said he had yet to make up his mind on whether to run for reelection or for a higher office.

"But I'm humbled by the fact that money is a problem," he said.

Picking brains

Recto, another neophyte senator, was listed as a rising leader who was "driven and charismatic" and had a potent weapon in the person of his wife popular actress and Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos.

"That's flattering, but flattery aside, will I give it much thought?" Recto said.

He said some US Embassy officials visited him to his office a number of times on discussions mostly economic and tax matters.

But he said he also questioned them on many issues: "They pick [my] brains and I pick their brains."

Recto said he was also still undecided about seeking reelection in 2007. "I'm afraid of the race," he said.

Shrugging it off

Sen. Michael Wilks, described as "parrot [eg.] himself as an independent thinker" when "international reporting" could pin him up on certain US issues, shrugged off the report and said he was "not saddened" by it.

He said he considered it "a great honor" to be a matinee idol.

He also professed delight at how the Americans said about him: "Mind to grasp internal jung-ung-ibus-ibus."

Villar, president of the Nacionalista Party, said he had spoken with some US officials on matters concerning but was not privy over their visits to his office during busy days.

The senator once had an unpleasant experience with a US arms ambassador, when he was "interrogated" by the latter for having him on the disputed Spratly Islands.

A savvy businessman and politician, Villar is also considered presidential timber.

He said his wife, Las Pinas Rep. Cynthia Villar, are owners of several estate empire and are the wealthiest couple in Congress.

Gonzales says Senate set him up

"The question of the senators as a high table, while he was seated looking apart there, made him feel he was being pressured," she said.

The 56-year-old Gonzales had been summoned to explain the dead he signed on July 25 with a 11 lobby group, Stealth LLC as well Assistant Smelling for President Mariagrad Arroyo's assistant Jeanne Ocampo.

The PSB-million agreement for one year has been recently criticized. Critics said it was an invitation for bouquet to overtones in a sweetheart bandwashing. They said the funding was questionable.

For failing to provide satisfactory answers, the senators cited Gonzales in contempt and ordered her detained. As the end of the hearing, Gonzales suffered from hypertension, prompting his hospitalization at the Philippine Heart Center.

Flanked until Gonzales warned "clinched and calm" after she was released from yesterday, but doctors were still monitoring his heart palpitations.

The media were barred from talking to Gonzales.

Senators 'rude'

Scores of supporters from Akyon Sambayanan and Partido Demokratiko Pilipino Lakas ng Bayan (PDSP) held a vigil outside the hospital, denouncing the "rudeness" of the senators to Gonzales.

PDSP spokesperson Danny Bubbels said the senators should have waited for the "medicinal survey" of the information being asked of Gonzales.

Bubbels said the senators seemed to be failing for answers they already knew and were angered when Gonzales did not give it to them.

After coming down hard on Gonzales, some senators appeared to have softened up yesterday. They embraced they [Gonzales] and Senate President Franklin Drilon has declared that the senators would be for the long haul.

Detention 'downgrading'

"We have to consider the fact that he's holding a high position in the government, and we must respect the position given by the Filipino people to functionaries like him," he said.

"He will be downgrading the position of a functionary of a government official... to other words, we will throw away the dignity of the government. The other countries will look down upon us," he added.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, however, maintained that Gonzales should be treated like the rest of the Senate witnesses asked to summoned and be detained at the CIDG.

"What's distressing about it? He has detained himself by feeling overpressure," Lacson said, referring to Gonzales' behavior in Wednesday's hearing.

Arroyo said it would be up to Senate President Franklin Drilon to decide whether Gonzales would be detained once he's given a clean bill of health by his doctors and is discharged from the Heart Center.

Miriam's proposal

Arroyo, however, expressed reservations at Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago's proposal that the President invite the Senate to allow Gonzales to testify in executive session, not in a public hearing.

"It's as if she's admitting that she knows about [the Stealth deal]. The President will not invite that," he said. He added that it would be "embarrassing" for the senators to agree to an executive session.

Santiago said that the President could save Gonzales from indefinite detention by writing a certificate to the Senate that he would testify in an executive session.

The presidential certification should provide that such executive and public interest require that Gonzales' testimony shall be conducted in executive session instead of a public hearing," Santiago said.

Formally speaking, it is unnecessary for the Senate to hold him in contempt.

"But if the senators apply the doctrine of interdependence strictly, then maybe he should be merely excused, or placed under house arrest," she said.

Key to liberty

"The key to the liberty of Gonzales lies in his hands. He can purge himself of the contempt decision of the senators by submitting to the oath and testifying again, and telling us what he showed to be the real happening," Estrada said. "The ball is in his court."

Bullit Rep. Rufus Rodriguez and Bayan Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo and Joel Virador said Gonzales should be sacked. They also said he probably was coerced to lie to the Senate.

"To disabuse the minds of people that she is involved in this, the President should fire him at once," Replica said.

Ocampo said the refusal of Gonzales to answer questions on the Stealth contract indicated that Ms Arroyo was trying to control "another impeachable offense." He said the Senate summons "borders on treason."

Unpatriotic

"It is unfair and unpatriotic for the Arroyo government to get the assistance of US and other foreign powers on hunting the assets of terrorists and criminals supposed by the majority of the people," he added.

Interior and local Government Secretary Angelo Reyes said he expected Gonzales to face the Senate again. "He is subjected to this," Reyes told reporters during a visit to the Clark Special Economic Zone. With a report from Donald Dreyza, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Boy, 6, saves sister from fire in Marikina

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

NOBODY IS TOO YOUNG TO to be a hero.

The Marikina City Council is planning to honor a 6-year-old boy who saved his 4-year-old sister from their burning house two weeks ago, City Fire Chief Antonio Razal said.

"We want him to serve as model to other children," he told the INQUIRER yesterday.

John Paul Villaflores was about to watch television at about 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 10 when he heard a commotion inside their compound in a subdivision in Barangay Nangka.

He went out and saw the houses of his relatives on fire.

His father Arnold was at work. His mother Arlette and two siblings were out buying snacks. His sister Rose Ann, 4, was sleeping in the upper floor of their house.

After the fire, John Paul told SPO1 Noel Guiyab that people around him were already panicking when he hurried back into their house.

6-YEAR-OLDY A23

METRO
Edited by Lito Ener G. Dizon

Fallen billboard disrupts MRT service

A METRO Rail Transit Corp. crew removes parts of a huge advertising billboard which was toppled by strong winds. The billboard fell and damaged a passing train.

By Clarissa S. Reyes

A GIANT BILLBOARD BETWEEN the Cubao and Kamuning railway stations fell on a moving train on the line of a northbound train in the Transit 3 and disrupted railway operations for close to eight hours yesterday.

This was the second time the MRT 3 operations tripped this week. On Monday, MRT operations slowed down at about 6 p.m. when a train coming from Taft Avenue stopped due to a power failure.

Nobody was hurt in the billboard incident, but the train was delayed for more than an hour and passengers had to walk along the tracks to get to the nearest station.

Rodolfo Lim, MRT spokesperson, said strong winds blew the billboard off its supporting steel frame and onto the power lines of the southbound train.

The cable snapped and caught fire in a dropped the locomotive. The train then stopped between the Cubao and Kamuning stations to unload the passengers. Nobody was hurt although thousands were stranded at the stations.

The train system that carries more than 400,000 passengers between North Edsa and Taft Avenue each day had to run [illegible] operations starting 10:40 a.m. yesterday.

Lesterson said the agency would charge the cost of repairs to advertising companies estimated at P4 million to the billboard owner.

The proliferation of huge billboards along Edsa remains a sticky issue for the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) who believes that fears of accident-advertising materials on the road right-of-way could cause accidents, and should be regulated.

The agency, however, had been barred from directing demolition on MRT facilities based on a preliminary injunction filed in court by a private ad company.

With the preliminary injunction still in effect, MMDA Deputy Chair Cesar Lacuna said local governments could apply regulations under the National Building Code laying down requirements for such structures with public safety provisions. With Reva S. Quintanilla

MetroBriefs

Eyes, ears vs drugs

Price cheats warned

NBI steps into battle over Navotas dump

By Blanche S. Rivera

AFTER FAILING TO GET A HOLD from the courts for the suspension of the operation of a controlled dump, the Navotas government has taken to fight against swimming groups in the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

The NBI yesterday summoned the leaders of the fishermen's group Pamalakaya-Bulacan which had been protesting the operation of the dump in Barangay Tanza and had blocked barges loaded with garbage on the Binuangan River since April. Pamalakaya-Bulacan chair Florencio de Jesus and his brother Lou-

ey de Jesus were ordered to report to the NBI's antikidnapping, hijacking and robbery division yesterday afternoon to explain the crisis blockade.

Eleven others received subpoenas signed by NBI director Reynaldo Wycoco and lawyer Hector Hermosisima early this week.

On Thursday, the fishermen blocked the entry of a truck barge with their boats during a "final passage," prompting Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco to seek the help of the NBI. Navotaldo's aide Ian Jude Cruz Fernando filed a complaint for kidnapping in the NBI into the five men's "desperate act" on the part of the mayor's

Boy, 6, saves sister from fire in Marikina

Boy, 6, saves sister from fire in Marikina

By Edwin Z. Tenio Jr.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2000 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

BSP raises key policy rates by 25 bps

As pressures on inflation continue to build up

By Gerlo C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY BOARD YESTERDAY RAISED BY 25 BASIS points the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' key overnight rates, to tame rising inflation driven by high oil prices.

"This was the second time this year that the BSP's key policy rates were raised.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwata Bautista announced that the key overnight borrowing rate was increased to 7.25 percent from 7 percent, while the overnight lending rate was raised to 9.5 percent from 9.25 percent.

Banks' interest rates on commercial loans and time deposit yields are also expected to rise as a result of the central bank's move.

The market had been expecting the tightening in view of the continued rise in global oil prices, the pressure on the local currency and the 25-basis point increase in the US Federal Reserve's rates to 6.5 percent on Tuesday.

"Given that the projected hike from cost-side pressures have intensified in recent weeks, the Monetary Board believes that it is important for the BSP to undertake monetary action now to prevent its inflation targets and avoid the need for drastic tightening measures later," Espenilla said.

The Monetary Board recognized that supply-side inflation pressures would further build up due to the continued rise in crude oil prices, Espenilla said.

Inflation rose 7.2 percent year-on-year in August after 7.1 percent in July as oil prices continued to increase.

The August figure was higher than the BSP forecast of 6.6-7.1 percent. For the first eight months of the year, inflation averaged 6.7 percent, well above the full-year target of 5 to 6 percent.

The board also considered that the recent growth in money supply might not necessarily be translated to consumption and investment spending, given that growth in bank lending remained moderate and that credit demand was showing signs.

"The BSP also noted that the revised rising foreign interest rates that is consistent tightening by other central banks could lead to further declines in interest rate differentials," Espenilla said.

The BSP was concerned about the narrowing interest rate differential, in turn, may encourage investors to dump their pesos in favor of dollar-denominated assets.

"Combined with current liquidity in the financial system, a shift towards dollar assets could lead to volatility in the peso-dollar exchange rate which, in turn, could raise inflation and inflation expectations," he said.

(story on)

WHAT'S INSIDE

PNB Japan branch under fire

Gov't urged to limit borrowings

Icebergs, Styro boxes and WTO

Smart readies purge of costly subscribers

PNB Japan branch under fire

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Bank's offshore branch in Tokyo is under fire from Japan's Financial Services Agency (FSA) over alleged subsidizing of foreign exchange and remittance transactions as well as the unauthorized sale of lottery tickets.

But PNB president Cesar Mir yesterday said that the bank would do whatever it was needed to comply with the Japanese regulators.

Japanese authorities have ordered the branch to submit an operations improvement plan by Oct. 31.

"We first heard out that PNB, without permission from the Japanese government, had set up service counters at travel agencies frequented by Filipinos to help them send money home and exchange currencies over the past year.

The bank runs nine counters and of involvement in unauthorized businesses at churches and travel agents in Japan. This included the sale of Philippines lottery tickets at its Tokyo branch and Nagoya satellite office.

The sale of lottery tickets is illegal in Asia's largest economy.

"While it positive is that no sanction has been imposed on us," Mir said, noting he was confident that the bank would continue with business as usual.

"Definitely, we will keep our branch in Japan because we'd like to service the requirements of the Filipino community there," Mir added.

The bank president said PNB was awaiting an English translation of the FSA order so that the bank could immediately address the Japanese regulator's concerns.

FSA, which earlier this year shut down the private banking operations of Citibank NA in Japan over certain violations, has banished PNB from opening more local branches in the country until it deems that the problem has been properly addressed.

The regulator also required PNB to submit a progress report once every three months.

Japanese regulators have ordered the local bank to address what the FSA suspects may be crime-linked activities such as withdrawals and remittance of large amounts of money by some individual customers.

The FSA is concerned that while PNB's bank managers have been aware of such transactions and have even informed the FSA about the matter themselves, they have let those customers continue the operations without proper control and identification.

PNB is controlled by tobacco and beer magnate Lucio Tan.

Ayala Corp. trims '05 net debt to $551M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AYALA CORP., THE COUNTRY'S LONGEST operating conglomerate, has trimmed its net debt by P30-million this year to $551 million.

Ayala treasurer Fernando Orpilla said that the bulk of Ayala's debt—roughly $300 million—would fall due in 2009.

Ayala has secured a total of $7.2 billion to leave this year to prepay some of its debts.

Recently, it signed a P4.2-billion loan agreement with BDO Capital Corp., First Metro Investment Corp., Insular Investment and Trust Corp., and China Banking Corp.

The loan will be used to prepay the company's dollar-denominated debts due to 2006, consistent with its debt refinancing program.

Ayala has $89 million in debts maturing this year and $112-million due in 2006.

Bonuses Bhimani, treasurer at Ayala, said the new loan would mature in seven years and will have a fixed interest rate of 10.375 percent a year. Ayala will have the option to redeem or buy back the loan beginning on the fourth year after its issue.

Ayala has roughly $200 million to address its maturing loans up to next year.

Ayala thought of tapping the debt market to improve its risk profile.

Atlas copper subsidiary up for listing

By Christine A. Gaylican

ATLAS CONSOLIDATED MINING and Development Corp. is bent on rehabilitating the Toledo copper mines and develop its other copper assets through its new subsidiary Carmen Copper Corp.

Atlas is also planning to have its subsidiary listed on the local and international markets early next year.

Carmen Copper has laid the groundwork for the rehabilitation of the Toledo copper mines in Cebu. The effort requires $138 million in investments, according to Martin C. Buckingham, executive vice president and chief finance officer of Atlas Consolidated.

"We have to postpone the listing until next year because of the very tight schedule some Christmas," said Buckingham in a press briefing. "There would be a two-week holiday that may not bode well for our IPO (initial public offering)."

The Atlas official said that the funds to be raised from the IPO would finance the re-opening of the Toledo mines, closed since 1991.

Atlas' copper project in Cebu was started in 1955. It covered around 5,000 hectares. The project, however, was stopped in 1994 after copper prices in the world market dropped.

The project now once the biggest copper mine in Asia. Majority control of the project was recently acquired by Alakor Corp.

Atlas, the former owner, relocated to the mainland, Luzon through a debt-for-equity swap with Alakor and Mineco Mining and Exploration Corp.

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ASIAN HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER

NOTICE TO ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

Please be advised that the annual meeting of the stockholders of ASIAN HOSPITAL, INC. (the "Corporation") will be held on October 20, 2005, Thursday, at 10:00 a.m. at the Multi-Purpose Hall, 4th Floor, Asian Hospital and Medical Center, 2205 Civic Drive, Filinvest Corporate City Alabang, Muntinlupa City, with the following agenda:

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Certification of Notice and Quorum
III. Chairman's Message to the Stockholders
IV. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on October 8, 2004
V. Presentation of the Report of the President and Chief Executive Officer
VI. Presentation of the Audited Financial Statements of the Corporation for the Year Ended 2004
VII. Ratification of Corporate Acts of the Board of Directors since September 15, 2004
VIII. Approval of the Amendment of Article III (on Independent Directors) and Article V (on the Executive Committee) of the Amended By-Laws of the Corporation
IX. Election of Directors for 2005 to 2006
X. Appointment of Auditors, on Technical Shares
XI. Appointment of External Auditors
XII. Adjournment

Stockholders who may not be able to attend the aforesaid meeting in person but wish to participate through a proxy may send a Proxy instrument to the Corporate Secretary not later than 5:00 p.m. of October 14, 2005 at the following address:

CARLOS ROBERTO Z. LOPEZ
ASIAN HOSPITAL, INC.
c/o 7th Floor, SSHG Law Center
106 Paseo de Roxas, Makati

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CORPORATION IS NOT SOLICITING PROXIES.

With respect to the election of directors (Item VII of the Agenda), stockholders who wish to nominate candidates for directors, including independent directors, must submit their nominations to the Nominations Committee at the following address not later than 5:00 p.m. of September 27, 2005:

THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ASIAN HOSPITAL, INC.
4th Floor, Asian Hospital and Medical Center
2205 Civic Drive, Filinvest Corporate City
Alabang, Muntinlupa City
Fax No. 810-01-10

All nominations should include (i) the signature of the nominating stockholder, (ii) acceptance and conformity by the nominee (iii) and curriculum vitae of the nominee, (iv) a statement that the nominee has all the qualifications and none of the disqualifications as set forth in the Corporation's Manual on Corporate Governance, Section 38 of the Securities Regulation Code ("SRC"), SRC Rule 38, SEC Memorandum Circular No. 02-02 dated April 5, 2002 and SEC Memorandum Circular 10-02 dated November 28, 2002, (v) information on the relationship of the nominee to the stockholder submitting the nomination, and (vi) all relevant information about the nominee's qualifications.

September 21, 2005.

(Sgd.) CARLOS ROBERT Z. LOPEZ
Corporate Secretary

(Sgd.) JOAN ADAO-CATTILING
Assistant Corporate Secretary

PSE: September 21, 2005

Incentives await book firms that go public

By Reuvel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL Book Development Board yesterday announced that it was offering a package of additional incentives for publishers that would list in the Philippine Stock Exchange in an effort to promote competitiveness in the local book industry.

NBDB Chairman T. Gonzales said publishers could strengthen their businesses if they could tap more funding capital channeled capital through the equities market.

Created in 1968 under the Book Publishing Industry Development Act, the NBDB aims to enhance the competitiveness of the industry, expand the domestic and international markets for locally-made materials and convert the country into a publishing hub of Asia.

Gonzales said the NBDB perks included free three-year registration with the agency, a tax exemption for the enactment of NBDB textbook review services for three years, priority in NBDB-sponsored seminars, trade fairs, conventions and free advertising space on the NBDB website, as well as its quarterly publication "Bookwatch" for three years.

"Even small and medium enterprises with a minimum capital of P50 million are now encouraged to invest in the P&L, which offers an opportunity to facilitate capital infusion and business growth," he added.

Gonzales said other NBDB officials have said there was a wide array of incentives for local book publishers.

THROUGH THE ROOF

Recruitment on patio top is solar panel atop a replica of a native hut that top as many go ways seems in Manila. The country is making steps to lessen its dependence on imported oil, whose prices in the world market are now climbing through the roof.

PSE urged to defer accounting proviso for pre-need firms

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHILIPPINE FEDERATION OF PRE-NEED Plan Companies Inc. has asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to defer the implementation of international accounting standards on the pre-need industry, fearing that now, saying it will likely blow their costs and paper deficits.

In a letter to the SEC last month, the federation said it would like to adopt measures according for the industry which allows pre-need firms to book income from collection of policy payments from plan holders.

Under the International Accounting Standards (IAS) — a set of standards to be implemented for all firms next year — collections are booked as expenses.

"Pre-need firms are wary of IAS 39 because under this standard, they have to recognize their accounting in the books," SEC general accountant Roberto Manalad said the business in an interview. "They have to audit what they have done. They will have to go back as far as 15 to 20 years to audit it. It is not that simple. I understand the situation of the industry regarding [how to be given more time."

"We have talked to independent chief parties, namely SGV & Co. as well as the Insurance Commission, to help us comply with the requirements of international accounting," the federation said in its letter. Unfortunately, we have not received any firm reply from them on whether we could adopt the said accounting for the interim. In view of the foregoing, we are regarding for the deferment of IAS for this year."

The federation — which is composed of more than 30 pre-need firms — first talked to the SEC on a different issue: Insurance Colleges Association Plan Philippines, Inc. (CAP) which has been the most vocal in adopting IAS 39 as an alternative to the Pre-Need Uniform Chart of Accounts (PNUCA) adopted in 2002 as a standard for accounting and reporting of finances and liabilities for pre-need companies.

CAP said that with the PNUCA in place, pre-need educational and pension plans are no longer treated as investment contracts but as insurance contracts, subject to the actuarial reserve liability (ARL) scheme.

The ARL requires pre-need firms to have updated, reserves to match future liabilities for all existing and liquid plans.

CAP argued that plans do not mature immediately in the immediate for one.

In its petition for rehabilitation filed with the Makati Regional Trial Court, CAP claimed that strict operating in foreseeable for the past two decades, the industry found itself in a bind after the SEC suddenly changed its regulatory guidelines governing pre-need companies. This was aggravated by a regime of uncontrolled success for increases brought about by government deregulation in the early 1990s.

CAP argued that the tighter accounting policies "came about after endless and inconsistent attempts" failed to place the pre-need industry under the jurisdiction of the Insurance Commission through legislation.

Worse, CAP's dealer's license and permit to sell were suspended last year due to what it claimed was a "threatened" trust fund deficiency due to the application of the PNUCA.

"It is the insurance companies that largely benefited from the strict imposition of the SEC on pre-need companies like CAP," the company said in its court filing. "The world's greatest Filipino invention like educational pre-need has allowed to suffer or be extinguished when it has helped fulfill thousands of parents' dreams to send their children to college."

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Investment Funds of Wealth Builder	November 11, 2005	November 12, 2005
Fixed Income Fund	1.031936	1.040801
Balanced Fund	1.036057	1.031271
Equity Fund	1.011838	0.917603

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...tapos kaliwa pagkatapos ng DALAWANG YOSI...

...en den diretso lang, den lep...LEP ha, KALIWA! ...sa may nakaupong aso...

...at pag nakita mo yung videokehan ni Aling Letty...

...wait lang ha...

...hindi pa doon..."

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Icebergs, Styro boxes and WTO

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

IMAGINE YOURSELF NAVIGATING A SHIP at sea. From a distance, you see the tip of an iceberg. Not far away is a giant styrofoam box that has double the height of the iceberg tip.

Not realizing the nature of the two objects, you try to avoid the box rather than the iceberg. If you do this and hit the iceberg, you encounter total disaster. If you knew that the styrofoam box had nothing under it, while the iceberg tip had a large dangerous base supporting it, you would have behaved very differently.

This is the image our Philippine trade negotiators should carry with them as they go to the World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting in Hong Kong this December. If they do not recognize the icebergs for what they are, they will plunge our country into disaster, with a further loss of jobs and increased poverty.

Background

Thanks to Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Domingo Panganiban who sponsored the "WTO Seminar on Agriculture and Related Matters" last Sept. 20-22, an emerging consensus was achieved by agricultural stakeholders, such as Alyansa Agrikultura leaders and DA officials from the different regions.

An insightful presentation was made by Jerome Bunyi of the DA's WTO desk. He showed the analogy that DA Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano has been expounding on regarding the total picture of assistance countries give their agricultural sectors. This is shown below:

TOTAL ASSISTANCE

At the WTO, developed countries argue for a level playing field. They point to the much higher tariffs of developing countries and pressure them to decrease their tariffs.

The principle of leveling the playing field is correct. But the playing field is not just tariffs, but the entire summation of assistance a country's government gives its farmers. This is both protection (e.g. tariffs) and support (e.g. subsidies). As we decrease our agricultural tariffs towards the lower levels of the developed countries, the huge subsidies of the developed countries have not been decreased by a similar degree. Taking the holistic view, we should therefore not be forced to decrease our tariffs unless the level of total assistance (that is, both protection in tariffs and support in subsidies) will also be leveled. We should reduce our tariffs only if we want to, and not be forced by WTO.

Facts and Figures

In an earlier meeting with farmer leaders of Pakisama led by Vicente Fabe, Risa Bernabe of the Philippine Peasant Institute (PPI) showed the research done by Raul Montemayor of the Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives. In the July 2004 WTO meeting in Geneva, some heralded the news that the developed countries had slashed their maximum allowed subsidies by 20 percent.

Again, this is not the complete picture. Unfortunately, the new maximum levels still exceed the actual subsidies given in 2000.

The new allowed subsidy level for the US is $38.1 billion, higher than their actual 2000 level of $24.8 billion. The same is true for the European Union ($91.1 billion versus $73.2 billion) and Japan ($36.7 billion versus $6.8 billion).

Compare these huge subsidy levels to that of the Philippines. In 2000, our actual subsidy level was only $300 million. Sadly, it been decreasing since then. In his Sept. 19 Inquirer column, former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Cielito Habito stated that for 2005, the DA's share of the national budget decreased from 3.6 percent to 3.28 percent. When this was cited during the workshop, the participants unanimously agreed to express their opposition to such a decrease.

The Filipino farmers are suffering a double whammy. Above the water line, their tariffs are being increased. Below this line, their subsidies are being decreased.

Big Noise

We must support DA and Undersecretary Serrano in their efforts to change the devel-

ICEBERGS/ B6

Philippine Stock Exchange

Stocks

From page B1

It was the main indicator's best finish since Aug. 29 when it ended at 1,996.33. The broader all-shares index was up 1.14 points to 1,108.28.

Value stood at 553.26 million shares worth P918.6 million. Gainers outnumbered losers 87 to 58, with 49 stocks unchanged.

Dealers said the market continued to stage a bullish rebound following weeks of decline, supported by foreign buying.

Data from the stock exchange showed foreign investors were net buyers in the past four sessions.

"[National] indicators have hinted a strong reversal [from weakness in previous weeks] coupled with renewed confidence from investors," said Jun Rodrigo of Inverworld Capital Equities.

But he said the positive momentum may have tapered off amid concerns of a rate hike and higher oil prices.

"We expected a correction after the four-day surge. But there was foreign buying towards the end of the session," added Ramon O'Hara-gayat of Westlink Global Equities Inc.

Rhodeyrand said the index should be able to break through the 1,970-resistance. AFP

Disclosures

FIL-ESTATE Corp. postponed the annual stockholders meeting; details will be announced later.

* * *

The **BANK of the Philippine Islands** board of directors approved the appointment of Lucio Tan as chairman and Manuel V. Pangilinan as compliance officer of BPI. The board also approved set a special shareholders' meeting to discuss the merger with Prudential Bank.

* * *

PHILWEB Inc. Bank a board of directors agreed to hold a special stockholders' meeting to discuss the merger with BPI.

ROXAS Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov 22, 10 a.m., at Manila Peninsula Hotel, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Oct. 14 are entitled to vote. **Concepcion Elvira Gibbs, PDI Research**

BSP raises key policy . . .

From page B1

The BSP's overnight repo was last adjusted, also by 25 basis points, in April as a "preemptive move" against rising inflation.

But while the rates were kept steady since April, the BSP implemented a monetary tightening last July through a 2-percentage hike in the reserve requirement on banks. This was aimed at curbing excess financial liquidity which was exerting pressure on inflation and the foreign exchange rates.

Currencies

Currency	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
Australia Dollar	Dollar	0.618500	1.000000	55.4700
Japan	Yen	0.007200	0.008688	0.3200
United Kingdom	Pound	1.685000	1.696700	94.1500
Europe	Euro	1.479000	1.488900	82.6500
Switzerland	Franc	0.942000	0.948600	52.6400
Canada	Dollar	0.693000	0.697700	38.7000
Singapore	Dollar	0.563000	0.566800	31.4400
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.128000	0.128900	7.1500
Bahrain	Dinar	2.650000	2.668400	148.0000
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.265000	0.266800	14.8000
Brunei	Dollar	0.548000	0.551800	30.6000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000200	0.000200	0.0111
Thailand	Baht	0.023000	0.023200	1.2900
UAE	Dirham	0.252000	0.253700	14.0700
Qatar	Qatar	1.269000	1.277500	70.9400
Kuwait	Dinar	2.438000	2.454400	136.2000
China	Yuan	0.119700	0.120500	6.6900
Denmark	Krone	0.199000	0.200300	11.1100
Norway	Krone	0.169000	0.170100	9.4400
Sweden	Krona	0.116000	0.116800	6.4800
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.261000	0.262800	14.5900
Bahrain	Dinar	2.650000	2.668400	148.0000
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.265000	0.266800	14.8000
Brunei	Dollar	0.548000	0.551800	30.6000
Kuwait	Dinar	2.438000	2.454400	136.2000
Kuwait	Dinar	2.438000	2.454400	136.2000

PNOC to tap potential partners in Russia

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL CO. has set its sights on Russia as a possible partner for the exploration and development of new oil and gas resources.

In an interview at the sidelines of the PhoenTrade conference and trade exhibition, PNOC president Eduardo Morales said he would soon visit Russia with Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo to meet with Russian energy executives.

The planned meetings, he said, would serve as a follow-up to the most Energy Secretary Vincent Perez's visit to Russia to discuss energy agreements with oil producers.

In an effort to seek new oil and gas sources outside the country, he said PNOC would be using political and cultural ties as a tool in resolving cut to other countries.

He said that Malaysia, for example, was able to use its predominantly Muslim religion and culture to forge alliances with other Muslim countries.

He said PNOC would use the country's good relationships with other countries as a takeoff point for possible new oil and gas exploration agreements.

The country's good relationship with the Caribbean country, Iran, for example, resulted in Gandhi's office for PNOC to explore and develop, free of charge, any of the potential oil and gas blocks there, he said.

Morales said the crisis that had already conducted initial assessments of available data on an Caribbean exploration blocks to help it decide whether or not it would actually explore.

Gov't urged to limit borrowings

By Doris C. Dumlao

FORMER BANGKO SENTRAL GOVERNOR Rafael Buenaventura yesterday cautioned the government against relying too much on foreign loans, except for refinancing and infrastructure needs.

Buenaventura said that even with the budget acceptance in the previous months, the country was still far from being away with external borrowings.

He said the country's susceptible surviving window was was projected to increase to $7.9 billion from $7.542 billion this year.

"If we keep borrowing to cover the cost of running the government, we are definitely headed for trouble," Buenaventura said in a speech before the joint membership meeting of the Financial Executives Association of the Philippines, Makati Business Club and Management Association of the Philippines.

"For example, if you are a company and you borrow money to expand your factory than should be fine, but to borrow to meet payroll is not sustainable," he warned.

He said the government must close the fiscal gap and stop running budget deficits over the next few years.

"Our enormous financial needs and enhancing requirements require us to continue our foreign borrowings, but if we can limit them to refinancing and for capital development or new some infrastructure, we should be fine," he said.

At present, he said the country's foreign debt level was at an "amber light with a caveat"—not bad but not good either.

He said the global financial markets still had appetite for the country's debt issuances and there was no bandwagon of outstanding debts, which means that maturing debts could be refinanced in the next few years.

However, he said global financial markets were not always expected to remain benign while domestic political situation was still volatile and unpredictable.

Aside from fiscal reforms, Buenaventura said the country would benefit from further banking and financial market reforms.

Climax seeks investors in Didipio project

By Raimel W. Dantiago

CLIMAX ARIMCO MINING CORP., THE local unit of Climax Mining Ltd. of Australia, is keen on tapping partners for its $300-million gold and copper project in near Dumarao Lakeside.

Company chair Jose O'Leveler Jr. said in an interview the firm was holding talks with financial institutions and interested parties who might want to take up as much as 25 percent interest in the project.

"The Didipio project is very attractive considering that copper concentrates are in short supply in the world," Leveler said.

He said Climax-Arimco planned to raise a third of the required investment through equity and use bank financing.

Leveler said the firm was in the chair of discussion with possible partners like Pacific Copper Ltd. of Japan and LG International of South Korea.

The Didipio gold-copper project covers 25,400 hectares of land in Kasibu town of Nueva Vizcaya and Pinglayanan town of Quirino.

Company data show that Didipio's reserves account for 29 million tons of minerals valued at about $9.03 million.

The mine has an expected life of at least 14 years, which will need a thousand workers during construction and 450 workers during commercial operations.

Former PSALM chief sues coal firm officials

FORMER POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND Liabilities Management Corp. head Edgardo del Prado has asked the Makati Regional Trial Court to declare as illegal the terms of certain offtakes of coal exploration and mining firm Diagonal Agro-minerals Inc. to remove him as the company's president and director.

In his complaint, del Prado claimed that certain officers of Diagonal, led by its chair Benjamin U. Concepcion and board member Bienvenido Marasigan, "unlawfully and unjustly deprived" him of his right and duty to perform his functions as company president, and that he was being divested of his shares in the company.

del Prado alleged his removal from the company was postponed and tackled to a board meeting although it was not part of the agenda and that he was replaced by former Commission on Election Chair Christian Monsod "without the benefit of an election."

"Monsod was simply declared director and president without securing the required majority vote of all the directors present," he said. Diagonal was established four years ago primarily to explore and operate in the Southern Cotabato area. del Prado said he was invited to join the firm and provide the necessary financial and technical assistance to the agency.

del Prado is also asking the Makati RTC to stop Diagonal from implementing the planned conversion of alleged advances to the company by certain officials into payments for their subscriptions. He said there was no quorum when the conversion was approved.

He also said he was "deprived of his stockholder's rights to inspect the books of Diagonal."

Icebergs . . .

From page B5

sized countries' desired paradigm of leveling tariffications.

We should not be forced to reform our tariffs until the economies of the developed countries tariffs and subsidies equals our own. When an Albanian Agriculture leader proposed that negotiating positions during the workshop, "the new Zelens, the workshop's resource person and a Counselor in the WTO Appellate Body Secretariat, said it was a logical position. However, he added that it was very difficult to attain.

What will or will not be attained at the WTO Ministerial Meeting will be determined not only by the skills of the negotiators but also by the support given by their countrymen in their home countries. It is one country, one vote in the WTO, where three-quarters developing countries than developed ones. We should therefore unite with the enlightened developed countries to achieve fair trade.

Other International has embarked on a "Big Noise" campaign to collect 10 million signatures, globally to "make trade fair" for presentation during the coming WTO negotiations. Already, Oxfam has collected more than 8 million signatures from over 200 countries and territories.

The Africans Agrifoundation is supporting this campaign. (For more information and a 3 pm. October 6 meeting on this, please call Cyd Alvarez at 920-4431). With our strong support, our government negotiators will not be misled by the industry-ips and representatives at the WTO Institute. They will instead avoid those dangerous icebergs and chart the fair trade course required for Philippine agricultural development.

Smart readies purge of costly subscribers

By Clarissa S. Balino

SMART COMMUNICATIONS INC. is preparing to cut earning subscribers and the clean-up, which could halt client take-up from the mid-June level of 30.6 million, will be completed by the first month quarter, its top official said.

By the end of the year, the subscriber base that Smart and Talk 'N Text will announce will only reflect the number of its revenue-generating customers, said Smart president Napoleon Nazareno.

He said the purging would be felt most in October and November, few months since the country's largest mobile phone company stopped the practice of giving away free IEE (subscriber identification module) cards in exchange for a reload phone chip.

The clean-up would not have an impact, however, on revenues of Smart or of Philippine Telephone Corp. that operates the Talk 'N Text brand.

Nazareno said revenue from the wireless units of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. continued to grow in July and August.

"So far, we have not experienced negative subscriber growth. July and August still gave us small net additions. But by October and November, I think it would be a negative number," said Nazareno in an interview.

The two-year promise employed by Smart and Piltel from Globe Telecom Inc. to boost subscriber numbers failed to work for their bottomlines because the strategy increased spending without delivering sufficient revenues.

Estimated to number between 2 and 4 million, the SIM cards subscribers include those who moved from one network to another almost every month to take advantage of the free P500 load in each phone chip.

Globe estimated it would save P300 million each quarter when it stopped the SIM swap, effected May.

"The impact of stopping the SIM swap would be felt the most in the fourth quarter. It could be offset by the holiday spending. But we will see," said Nazareno.

The Smart president had ruled out meeting a 25- to 27-million subscriber target by yearend. He said the projection made at the time of the year considered continuing the SIM swap program.

"Let us be clear that the purging of subscribers won't have any impact on our revenue," he said.

"By the end of the year, we would have an accurate picture of our subscriber base and, from there, we could plan more effectively," Nazareno pointed out.

Smart and Talk 'N Text added only about 500,000 customers during the second quarter compared to previous levels of claiming a million or more new subscribers into the fold.

BSP overhauls penalty scheme for errant banks

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS has overhauled its monetary penalty system to levies classify breaches of banking regulations based on gravity of offense and the erring bank's size.

The refinement is in line with proposed changes in the BSP's charter, which among others, seeks to increase the maximum monetary penalty on banks from the current P50,000 to P500,000 per violation per day.

The new penalty system also considers aggravating or mitigating circumstances. Such aggravating circumstances could be commission of the offense or inaction while a mitigating factor could be evidence of good faith.

The new BSP circular clarified the definition of "serious" offense to cover any unsafe or unsound banking practices, whether active omissions, which are contrary to accepted standards of prudent banking operations and may result in exposure to abnormal risk or loss.

A less serious offense, on the other hand, is defined as a major act or omission, which includes failure to comply with the requirements of banking laws, rules and regulations as well as directives having material impact on the bank's solvency, liquidity or profitability.

A minor offense includes acts or omissions which are procedural in nature and can be corrected immediately, and do not have material impact on the solvency, liquidity and profitability of the bank.

The refinement also considers the violator's asset size, which means that a rural bank which had committed the same offense as a commercial bank will be slapped with a lower fine.

Under the proposed amendments to its charter sponsored by Senate banking committee chair Sergerio Angara, the BSP may slap either maximum or erring banks and its officers.

Criminal penalties for violations of banking laws and regulations will be increased from P200,000 to P2 million.

Under the draft charter, serious or grave violations by universal and commercial banks or their directors or officers shall be slapped with the maximum daily fine of P500,000. Less serious violations shall be charged P150,000 and minor violations with P50,000 per day.

For subsidiaries of universal and commercial banks, thrift banks, quasi-banks and their subsidiaries and affiliates, grave violations shall be penalized P100,000 per day, less grave offenses with P50,000 and minor violations with P25,000.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

MONDAY TUESDAY FITNESS WEDNESDAY 2BU THURSDAY FOOD FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

JADE CHIPS
color wrap
hollow-waisted
gown

Monique Lhuillier celebrates motherhood

TALK ABOUT A FILIPINA who has it all. Monique Lhuillier, already enjoying fame and fashion celebrityhood in Los Angeles and New York, is five months on the way with her first child. The milestone has been subsequently reported in fashion mags in the US.

As you may know by now, Monique is the first Filipino designer to make it in the American fashion mainstream and to dress up Hollywood stars for the red carpet and on their wedding day (e.g. Brittney Spears and Britney Gunner's aisle). She spun off her bridal gown business into a high-glam couture line that's now part of the fashion collections in Los Angeles and New York. She met husband Tom Hughes, a former finance exec who has steered Monique's business, most but on top of the world now that they are in their hollow years.

The recent New York Fashion Week was extra special for Monique. "This season is personally very emotional for me. I was elated when I discovered we would soon be welcoming an addition to our family," she wrote in an exclusive 2006 Spring/Summer collection.

"I found myself very reflective, giddy and passionate the weekend the design process. By day, I took my inspiration from the '50s mod period, with whipped and swing in the skirts, jackets and cocktail dresses. Evening is fluid and soft with a quiet, elegant feel. Hints of an aqua colors the gown. The smoky color palette gives it an overall dramatic sultry feeling."

LIFE-STYLED

Monique Lhuillier

Shoshee Tan Zuzo

If love Sophia Coppola was there and wrote us to say how happy Monique seemed, what with her parents Mikhel and Jacqueline Lhuillier also around, to share the news. In hindsight it was the first time Monique's dad Michel was there.

The show was well received by fashion critics, including the New York Times' Cathy Horyn. Fashion bible Women's Wear Daily reviewed her collection alongside those of Marc Jacobs and Bill Blass. After noting the red spun and "swing" in Monique's collection, the fashion-style bible was drawn to white, pastels. WWD wrote: "Lhuillier is now clearly interested in creating romantic evening looks, a logical direction she took after years of designing bridal collections. And whether she swings her future collections away from the bride or not, these show they all had the designer's signature grace."

Aside from the lace dresses and chiffon gowns, WWD decided over her "short looks

BUSINESS 21

The Filipino designer who's on top of the fashion world draws inspiration from pregnancy

MONIQUE Lhuillier

Earthbound angel

Undeniably feminine without being too slinky

Burnt sienna top with ruched empire waist and blue floral peplum (P1,195), available at Chocolate

Basic blue

Not a pair of bell bottoms, but definitely has flare—and flair

Denim pants (P1,795), available at Chocolate

Window shopping

That '70s show

Text by Shirley Oh and Bea Fortunato
Contributor
Photos by Jason Victoria

PEOPLE GET IT WRONG! ALL the time: '70s fashion isn't all about tight polyester bell bottoms and psychedelic prints. A lot of it is actually about the natural ease of preppie/hipster dressing, spruced up by details such as crocheted accents and earthy hues.

Think tomboy chic a la Diane Keaton from "Annie Hall" or, for a more classic reference, Ali MacGraw in "Love Story", sexy beauty fashion that hits the right mix of artfussy chic.

Fast-forward to the 21st century and you can match dark flared denims and ethnic-inspired sandals with soft pieces, such as knit tops or airy blouses, during the day. For night, mark the sex appeal with angel-sleeved blouses worn with slit maxi skirts.

Don't forget the heels. And, oh, when we definitely say needed.

Short and sweet

Hit the dance floor with micro-minis and conversation-starting shoes.

Blue denim skirt with snaw-like bird design (P2,195), available at Chocolate

Aquamarine ankle-strap pumps with white leather piping, cork soles and jewel-detail, price available upon request at VNC

Understatement

Who says sexy needs to be figure-skimming?

Dark blue empire-waist top with lace-angel sleeves (P1,195), available at Chocolate

Dusty green denim skirt (P1,195), available at Chocolate

Brown crocheted ankle-strap pumps with zebra leather upper, price available upon request at VNC

No flat soles

When your sandals are made of durable material in subtly eye-catching shades

Wooden T-strap sandals, price available upon request at VNC

Prep me up

Very scholarly chic. It's the cutest word in class

Blue-and-melon striped V-neck knit top with ruched sides (P 1,195), available at Chocolate

A good wedgie

For additional height and fur-out glam factor

Zebra-and-red gladiator-style wedges, price available upon request at VNC

TRIANGLE-SHAPED accessories are centered full tops with criss-cross tunic tops that contain with a thin halter-inspired scarf and are tucked with jeans.

OLIVE beaded tunic hugs an hourglass figure. Also available in orange.

Tantalizing tunics

TUNIC TOPS ARE TEE-RIFFIC! IN the season. It's a classic piece of garment that can either conceal or emphasize womanly figures. In the market, feeble tunics are preferred because it provides styles that match the four different body shapes of women: hourglass, triangle, rectangle and inverted triangle.

From sequin-clad to embroidered, beaded or printed clothes, any confident lady shopper can choose an ideal tunic top that will look perfect on her.

ASYMMETRIC chiffon tunic with knit is made especially for rectangle-shaped women.

Even better, when you buy a tunic top of Puffin, you also get a free Bolin inspired scarf or muffler. The inner scarf will truck you how to use the scarf as a belt, headband, slit, neckline and a vest line.

Puffin stores are located at SM North Edsa Annex, SM Megamall, Robinsons Galleria, SM Southmall, SM Sangandaan, SM Bicutan (during festival time), Market! Market! The shops Greenhills and Ayala Center Cebu.

VERSATILE tunic tube top becomes a dress or skirt. Just remove the straps.

PINK and green tunic with embroidery can diminish the upper body of an inverted triangle female.

THEME AMBIANCE of the chandeliered tent and Moroccan-style dining, superbly organized by hostess Vicky Zobel

PROFESSIONAL belly dancers have the audience applauding for more.

HIT: our hero is party! Andrew Tan, Margi Moran, Hilary Caparoso and Rosanna Arcasena Perez

Fun Moroccan nights

THEY ARE ALL DRESSED TO BRIGHTEN and light up Cosmo Manila's social scene. And let me tell you, judging by ours at times they come comfortable in their long gowns, tits, that we couldn't even sit just to comfy around, but always with a shade of chic.

That's how it was. The main menu in their no-nonsense strands and the women, in their Moroccan-inspired velvet pieces.

The menu, palengke-style, was an alluring garden fountain-ically transformed in to chic-gant Moroccan chandelered tent, with Persian rugs, was turned over the elevated wooden floor and chairs-pit lose around the low tables.

All the painstaking preparation and organization was for the birthday celebration of Bukidnon's longest-serving and respected governor, Joe Zubiri. The ultra-glam wife, Vicky Fernandez Jr., went all out in making the birthday bash extra-memorable.

Yolanda Sumotte of Fe Moss outdid herself with the full Moroccan dinner menu.

You've sampled all the yummy mushrooms and spinach cigars and the delicious Baba Ghanoush hummus.

Main course was chicken and lamb tagine, the meat fresh and tenderly succulent, perfectly roasted leg of lamb, fruity rice and watercress side salad.

The homemade mousse, a specialty of Vicky, was finished before you could bat an eyelash. Dessert was lemony yoghurt cake.

For wines, Sigrid Uytengsu brought two white Sauvignon Blanc wines, a rosé and a red, both Chilean wines.

When you have the original maker of the caviar cakes in town, it's the time that makes the big difference, not a pinch, Ashley?

And for the grand surprise of the evening, Vicky had live eye-catching belly dancing to... (I almost do a couple of sexy belly dancing numbers with Joe and his son, Rep. Miguel Zubiri) getting into the act, to the delectation approval of the patrons.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Maurice Arcasche
Photos by Alec Yan Hagen using Rodak EasyShare Z981

The stars all seem they could all take up belly dancing.

When the dancers finished, many of the society gals tried to dance on the floor, and only a few succeeded. Sigrid Uytengsu and stunningly beautiful Michelle Zobel looking divine both had natural hips-for-days-in-Spain/got-close-to-the-art of thing.

And the rest should enroll and take belly dancing seriously.

Businesswoman beauty Rhia Gonzales Garcia was standing in line. "I should have worn my authentic Moroccan robes which I have at home," she told me, while her super-steady escort for years, businessman Cesar Gabaldon, was busy taking photos.

He told me: "Maurice, let Alec (Ate Hagen) rest and I'll take the shots."

Somewhere, Alec must just have said: "Thank you, yourself," and I'll work."

Adorable Amore Ambassador to the U.S. in Geneva, Ebing Escudero was having a ball. And during Joanne Peralta's performance, she was on the stairways no less. He declared me a winner with the 40 minutes I could no more than a day in it. "Oh well, you can name your next wine," she said.

Undersecretary Gonzales had the most sensational look of the evening while Mandy Perez Rubio won the most colorful headed blouse.

Monina Neely was photographed in her stylish green-inspired feather which she got from a French Peace Corps boutique in Paris.

Once the magnificent dinner was over, with more Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin champagne and sweets coming, the tireless got on the roll with the awesome Moroccan music. Everyone had fun and thereafter night away till 4 a.m.

Only the most obedient "cause de morrilla" of Malou and Mahong's household and would not wanted to be 2 for tomorrow rooms of good health, wealth and happiness.

Vicky at the end told me: "This is the last party I'll give. But those we still the wedding receptions for my son Miguel in December one in Bukidnon, the other in Cagayan. Then next year when Stephanie (the youngest daughter) gets married in July in Toulon, France. Before leave in June) am taking care of the reception at their estate."

One thing's for sure. When the Zobel couple entertains, you can be sure of fun.

Hey, Joe Jr. can't be more memorable later to come. Cheers, palengke!

Bazaar

It's the time of the year where all those fabulous ideal shopping and fun-shopping galavanting and like in the past years the Friends for Cultural Concerns of the Philippines will hold a pre-Christmas Grand Bazaar to raise funds for its various projects.

This year, the two-day bazaar will be held on Sept. 24-25, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the World Trade Center on Sunset Blvd., Pasay City. Admission is free.

FCCP is a non-stock, non-profit organization that nurtures talented artists and gives scholarships and financial grants to deserving ones.

They all you talented entertainers, call Angie at 8 (7)905, 8 (7)870 or (02) 6346279. Booths are still available.

THE MORDCAN CONNECTION. Raul Hemanes, Bulli Vicuñas, celebrator Gov. Joe Zubiri, his wife, the hostess Vicky Z., son Diguh Zbenzil, Maricis Zobel and Teller Vidal

SO IN LOVE. The beauty Maricel Pineda and the man, Johnny Schuppen

ADORABLE couple Alcuel Carla Tengco

STILL enchanted are Rhia Gonzales Garcia and her constant hero and escort, Cesar Gabaldon

GUITONA! Fun pub Bong Dean and Nicky Lopez Tuason

SUSHI EXPERT and Macau director Mel Lorenzo and wife Lucille Carlos L.

SUPER PALS. Bubbly Perez Rubio and wife, statuesque eye-catcher Mindy P.R., and Louie Yuvasi

M&S treasury hunk Cosmo Gonzales Arcasena, Susan Reyes and Carol Garcia

THREE MUSKETEERS. Successful entrepreneurs Charlie Carreon, Rocco Tuason and Joe Perez

POPULAR couple. Business magnate Randy Ardua and television host Carol Cuenco

Lysette Bautista C.

POLO player and businessman Inigo Zobel and Fernie Villalon

CARLO Carreon and Rep. Miguel Zubiri

PRIMA Rosas, Jinggoy Antonio and Ed Peralta

SO CHIC and so famous. Peter Garrucho his wife Isa Joly Ching Escobar, Margie Zenaida Tambunting and husband Ambassador Jesus "Onching" Tambunting, Cesar Gabaldon, Ambassador Tessie Lagdameo and wife, world-class ballroom dancer Linda Florendo L.

GORGEOUS Carol Garcia with the fabulous back of the night

FCCP Bazaar Committee (seated) co-chairpersons Tess Castro, president Meli Rivera, chairlady Cristina Lucot Mabul Abaya, and treasurer Lulu Cacnio; (standing, seated) Baby de Jesus, Carrie Bautista, Nenuca Bisnar, Thelma Sanz and Bayan Villaraneza

STUNNING beauties Gina Tambunting Reyes, Maricis Cardenas Zobel, Rosanna Arcasena Perez and Carol Garcia

BACKSTAGE: Daphne Oseña, Monique Lhuillier and Patrick Paz

LOU Arroyo, Amparito and Michel Lhuillier

TREASURINGS: Harold Tibaon's Sexy Movies in purple; silver vest behind; pretty bibbon, Rissa Grumpo and Doris Magsaysay-Ho

Monique Lhuillier celebrates motherhood

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(which) were the broken cookies for breakfast, her favorite dress and a little book buttoned cutely shut by a silver eyelet marked not a block embroidered tulle and chiffon flared skirt."

Aside from Daphne and journalist-husband Patrick Paez, other Filipinos who wore Monique's collection include Olivarez and Tina Ocampo, Doris Magsaysay Ho, Monique Villanueva and Painting Cino Mathews.

Daryl and Pilar's, we were told, lost no time in asking Monique (yet again) to bring her collection to Manila in 2002 for the Fashion Ball. I heard it's also that's been her intent to do the making.

It is hoped that in 2002 her countrymen here will finally see a Monique Lhuillier collection.

Tribute to Fr. Galdos

Former students and friends... who want to [illegible]—of Fr. Joseph Galdos are hosting the Arnel's 77th birthday tomorrow with a tribute.

Father Galdos was a highly popular English and Literature teacher at Ateneo and later Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, who was famous for his kind yet insightful homily. His skill at giving significant reflection to a [illegible] was put to good use in the '90s and '90s when he wrote the highly popular column 'Heart and Soul' for the Sunday Chronicle and later, in the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

It is interesting that while I was the editor who asked him to write those columns, I never sit down and ever him. He communicated with us through writing. Yet he was a larger-than-life persona in my growing-up years—as a cultural master. Our class at St. Theresa's remembered him because, first, he looked like Bob Hope, and second, because his reflections were so swift and peppered with anecdotes they were just so funny.

As it turned out, teachers at Ateneo and from all over the country remember him for a lot more—his classroom management expertise, how he could manage a class of 50 to 60, and his passion for nurturing students. He founded the Ateneo Center for English Language Teaching in 1981 to create out to more teachers.

He leaves now that he's been stricken with Alzheimer's disease. Yet his influence has been considerable enough for the alumni and friends to form the Father Galdos Club.

The Club and the Women of Ateneo will hold the Tribute tomorrow, 3-5 p.m., at the Manuel C. Pangilinan Center, at Ateneo campus. Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., will be the special guest speaker.

Those wishing to greet Father Galdos must make visit reservations. Call Vicky Calderon, 4266001 loc 5115, or email vcalderon@ateneo.edu.

Dynamic pursuit

Pursuing a life after cancer diagnosis has never been this dynamic. On Sunday, at Bahia Shangri-La, the I Can Serve Foundation is hosting a series of talks on coping with breast cancer in various dimensions, from the clinical to the philosophical, the personal and the mundane. The whole day affair will include topics such as silver Linings (the most touching and powerful testimonies) led by breast cancer survivor Ellaine Ortuzar, Setting Up Hospice Care by Bonnie Reyes, and Rose The Other Half Copes by Ann Pamelos, Cadlinn Ignacio Tayona and Bunny Cantonberg. There'll also be the practical side: Caregiver at home and the environment by Dr. Rocky Singson, Diet Holiday for the Senses by Rachel Alejandrio, tones on the spot wig demonstrations, and how to look and feel good during and after chemo. Call 6807394.

E-mail the author at lucmanzo@link.com.ph

FROM the collection, silk white gazar hand-ruffled skirt

Fab 8 Image Search awards night set

THIRTY-ODD FINALISTS will compete this Fab 8 Image Search awards night on Nov. 28 at SBC Hall, for 8 bubbly females. Fantastic Makati. The new finalists recently descended en masse to the Mega 21-Day Mall screening recently held at Powerscreen Galleria.

CONCERT. Pianist Walt Bocaja breathes life to the Rite 4th Favorite Encores in Fazio Point Presents tonight at 8 p.m. Point, Intramuros. Manila. 40-minutes' free.

GOINGS ON

SMALL FAVE. Nicki's Empire Estate Fair (exclusively) organizer reveals a 14-kilt fair dubbed Beauty from Afar until tomorrow at Activity Center of Market! Market, Bonifacio Global City. The fair is open 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Free admission for senior and children.

BAZAR. Bhadra Fashion will be held Sept. 21 and 22, 9 a.m.-7 p.m., at La Pavilion, Metropolitan Park, Roxas Blvd., Manila.

SURVIVE TILT. The Philippine Surfing Circuit 2001 national open surfing competition on Sept. 24-29 in Zambales Island. Oct. 6-9, Subic. Pandan Some Sun 30-20, Cabanatuan Nov. 14-21, Lucena, Quezon del Sur, and Dec. 10-16, San Juan, La Union. Call Chay Pallayon at 0910-5350000 or Mhay Fondal, 0911-2080511.

ANNIVERSARY. Robinsons Place Iloilo marks its first anniversary at Plaza Iloilo with 400+ SM's its premier Fiesta on Sept. 24 and 25. Festivities will start tomorrow with a multimedia, breakfast extravaganza. On Sept. 25, a fabulous cocktail reception and concert will be held.

TRADE FAIR. Regions Trade Fair in Mandaue ongoing until 9.3. 2 @ Gaisano Mall Advanced Center. The 2001 Mandaue Festival and the concerted trade and investment drive Fiesta Grand Promotion of La Carlota City will take at various parts of Ayala Center.

BAZAAR. The annual Assumption Bazaar will be held Sept. 25 and Oct. 2 at Ateneo Intramuros Alumni. Tickets will be sold at the entrance. Proceeds will benefit the campus Chapel. Call 8940000 to 8945000.

PERFORMANCE. Concert at the Park presents Dimalog on Sept. 23 at Rizal Park open-air auditorium, Manila. The program features the guitar and ballet Fourth students of Centro Escolar University. Admission is free.

EXHIBIT. The Philippine School of Interior Design presents a graduation exhibit entitled 'FSID Gets Personal' on Sept. 20-23, 2F at Greenhill 1, Makati. The showcase class of 2001 will feature 20 studios divided into 8 design personality categories: Art Deco, classical, pure, artistic, bohemian and eclectic.

OPENING. The Overland Gourmet Bistro and Wine Lounge is inaugurated Sept. 20. Drop in any time for Happy Hour and Wednesday Ladies' Night Specials and Bowl Games. Shop using your Manila International Bank Credit Card to avail of discounts and free items. Call 8654341.

LECTURE. Interior designer Ramon Pimentel will visit Manila this month to meet local carpenters, cabinetmakers and craftsmen involved in design. Call Bind Beautiful Shopping Mall in Sept. 20 at Every Habitat Institute, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. 0919-5152804.

PHOTO SHOW. A photo exhibit on Peter A Experience in Business in Manila will be held Sept. 30-Oct. 5 at Rockwell Tent, Makati. Participating are Big Screamers, Bong Alcaraz, Tonton Ilyas, Boots Rod, Ambeth Ocampo, Ronald Yapan, Kenny Villoria, Chito Sevilla, Ben Rosario, Bench Dimaranan, Joe Galvez, Jennifer Sumulong, Willy Ayala, Tito Sarmiza, Mon Isagani, Jill Ocfemia, Kembee Arogante, Dominique Lucero and Shangri Reyes. Admission is free.

WENCESCO Ramoncarro celebrates its 50th year with an ongoing fashion exhibit until Sept. 30 at 2FF, Jose Abad Santos, Landa Bagtas, Sanjuan. Call 7246882. Photo shows (from left) Miss Hsiang, Store Specialists, Inc./Sole Owners and Boutique Chris, Fortune Logic Corp.